ANECDOTES

OF

TWO WELL-KNOWN FAMILIES.

WRITTEN BY A DESCENDANT;

AND DEDICATED TO

THE FIRST FEMALE PEN IN ENGLAND.

PREPARED FOR THE PRESS

By MRS. PARSONS,

Author of "An Old Friend with a New Face,"
&c. &c.

"Of real novelty we're told there's none;
"We know there's nothing new beneath the ſun!
"Yet ſtill, untir'd, a phantom we purſue;
"Still expectation gapes at ſomething new."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. N. LONGMAN, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1798.

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WRITTEN BY A DISCONSOLANT,

FOR THE HELP FRIENDS NOW IN ENGLAND.

PUBLISHED FOR THE TIMES

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BRITISH MUSEUM
15 FEB 29

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OF

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"MY anceſtors were Frenchmen, and of ſome conſequence in their own country: but being proteſtants, were obliged to fly from thence, and my grandfather ſettled in Wales, where he bought a houſe and farm, and lived frugally in the cultivation of his own land. He had only one child, my mother, who, unhappily, loſt both her parents before ſhe was fifteen. The man in whoſe care her perſon and fortune were left, concealed a baſe, avaricious heart under the ſemblance of induſtry and civility to his neighbours.

"This man had impoſed upon the unſuſpicious mind of my grandfather, who

made him ſole truſtee for his only child. He had a ſon, and took advantage of the power lodged in his hands to perſuade and oblige my mother to marry this youth, not then nineteen. The father conſequently managed their fortune as he pleaſed; and having two daughters, portioned them out handſomely, doubtleſs with great part of my mother's money,

"I was the fruit of this marriage; and as we lived in a ſtyle of reſpectability, I had every advantage of education that country afforded. When my parents became of age, the guardian of their property gave ſuch an account as he thought proper. Both were diſappointed. The young man had married from intereſted motives; my mother, partly from force, and perſuaſions ſhe could not withſtand.

"My father finding his independence ſhort of his expectations, ſlighted and neglected his wife; while ſhe, convinced that ſhe was wronged by both the father and the ſon, grew equally indifferent to him. I was the ſole object of her affections, for ſhe had no other child. At a ſchool, where

where I was placed, I became acquainted with Miſs Hales and Miſs Meredith; the former your friend the counteſs, the latter Lady P * * *. They did me the honour of particular notice. I occaſionally paſſed weeks at each of their houſes; and this was by far the happieſt period of my life.

"I was nearly twelve years old when my grandfather died; and ſeveral miſunderſtandings having latterly taken place between him and his ſon, by his will he cut him off from every thing but a ſmall paternal eſtate which he could not alienate, worth not more than fifty pounds a year, and gave the bulk of his fortune between his two daughters.

"This ſtroke completed the miſery of my mother. Her huſband, enraged and mortified, would no longer reſide in Wales; he diſpoſed of all my mother's property, and went to London, leaving only the eſtate I have mentioned for her ſupport and mine.

"As no love exiſted between them, my mother was more grieved on my account than wounded in her heart: but there was

no remedy; and patient ſufferance had long been the principal feature in her character.

"Near four years ſhe lived in ſolitude, and with a rigorous economy, to ſpare from a poor pittance for my education; and the clergyman of the pariſh dedicated many of his hours to my inſtruction. About the period I have mentioned we had news of my unhappy father's death, who had ſpent to the laſt ſhilling, and abſolutely died in confinement: but in the laſt cloſing ſcene he repented of the wrongs he had done to his wife, gave her addreſs, and implored her forgiveneſs.

"This event greatly affected my mother. He was the father of her child, and had died under the moſt unhappy circumſtances. He had never *permitted* me to *love* him; yet I had been taught to reverence him as a parent, and I was not unmoved at his death.

"This affliction was ſoon followed by another. The farm-houſe on our ſmall eſtate one night caught fire, ſuppoſed to happen from lightning, and was reduced to aſhes, all help being in vain; and the out-

houſes

houſes were ſo damaged as to be uſeleſs. This was indeed a dreadful ſtroke. My mother had no money to rebuild the premiſes, and the value of the eſtate was in conſequence reduced to thirty-five pounds.

"Whilſt ſhe was ſtruggling with ſorrow, the good clergyman I have mentioned came to her. A ſiſter of his was ſettled here in Edinburgh, in the ſame line, but on a more extenſive ſcale than I am now. She wanted an aſſiſtant. He thought me capable of the undertaking, if my mother would condeſcend to accept ſuch a proviſion for me.

"She had no falſe pride. A ſituation reſpectable and lucrative ſhe thought it her duty to procure for me; for pride and poverty, ſtruggling, among former friends, to ſupport a conſequence we were no longer entitled to, ſhe regarded as a much greater degradation than independence procured by induſtry.

"She therefore readily accepted an offer I as willingly embraced. She ſold her eſtate, and bought a ſmall annuity for

our joint lives. She paid my aunts the compliment of conſulting them, though they had never concerned themſelves in our misfortunes but by letters of uſeleſs pity. They approved of the plan immediately, and each of them ſent me ten pounds as a preſent, the firſt and only favours I ever received from them.

"I would have rejected the money from my proud relations, but my mother would not ſuffer me. 'My child, (ſaid ſhe,) we have no right to their fortune,' no claim to their affection; for reprobated by the brother who was bound to protect us, how could we expect favours from his ſiſters? Receive this ſmall preſent gratefully. There is no perſon ſo indifferent to us, no one ſo inſignificant, but at ſome period of our lives may have it in their power to ſerve or injure us; therefore never willingly offend any one. They are your aunts, and it is poſſible they may have the inclination, as well as the ability, to be your friends. At any rate perform your duty, and be as ſuperior to pride and reſentment

reſentment as to meanneſs and undue humiliation. Thank them with gratitude, but ſupport your own character.'

" With this dear parent I left my native country. My two friends had ever attached themſelves to me: but we lived ſome miles aſunder after the ſeparation of my father and mother, and letters were the only teſtimonies I could receive of their affection.

" We arrived ſafely at Edinburgh, and I was ſoon put into poſſeſſion of my new employment. My dear mother boarded in the ſame houſe. We lived happy and in harmony for three years, when a great alteration took place: I loſt the deareſt and tendereſt of mothers by a ſevere fever, at a time when I moſt needed her advice and aſſiſtance.

" An old gentleman lived at Edinburgh—a French refugee. He had a ſon, who enjoyed a place at the caſtle. This ſon had long been attached to me; and I confeſs my partiality for him was not leſs than his for me.

"Monſieur Gaudry ſoon learnt our mutual affection. He had nothing to object to it but on the ſcore of prudence. My annuity was not much; his income was ſmall; the old gentleman ſubſiſted on a penſion, which ceaſed at his death; therefore our proſpects were but limited.

"But love and prudence are ſeldom aſſociates in young people; we thought we had an abundance: "love would amply ſupply the deficiencies of fortune." Such are the fallacious hopes of youth and inexperience, till difficulties overtake them, and prove to the raſh infatuated pair they had placed a veil over their eyes in the hours of fondneſs, which is removed by poverty, when the pleaſing chimeras raiſed by paſſion are ſuddenly diſpelled, and ſucceeded by deſpair.

"We married, and were happy in each other for ſome months. The firſt misfortune was the death of our kind father, with whom we lived. But this trouble was ſucceeded by a joyful event: I was ſafely brought to bed of a daughter, a lovely

lovely child, who was the darling of our affections.

"Alas! vain blind mortals that we are! Elated by the completion of hopes, gratified in our wiſhes, we exult in our fancied bliſs, heedleſs of the rocks and quickſands which, in one moment of falſe ſecurity, may daſh our little bark of happineſs upon a fatal point, or ingulph it in a whirlpool, where all is loſt for ever!

"Two years after the birth of my ever-dear Maria I loſt her father, by a ſudden but violent illneſs of five days only. He was the beſt, the tendereſt of huſbands; and had not my dear child made its claims upon my heart, and rouſed me from that extremity of ſorrow into which I was plunged, in all probability I ſhould ſoon have followed him to the grave.

"My child, by its endearments, recalled me to my duty. I ſtruggled to live for her: but when I came to review the ſtate of my affairs, deſpair had nearly overcome me. The chief part of our income was loſt with my huſband, and what remained was inſufficient for our ſupport.

But Providence does not deſert the fatherleſs and widow. The dear lady I had lived with previous to my marriage, offered to receive me on the former terms, and my ſweet child with me.

"With joy and gratitude I accepted the offer; and for ſixteen years following my life reſembled a calm ſea, undiſturbed by the boiſterous elements, ſmooth and ſmiling, inſpiring delicious hopes, and falſe ſecurity.

"Oh, Miſs Maſham!" cried Madame Gaudry, the big tears dropping from the ſurcharged eye, "my Maria was good and lovely; ſhe was the pride of *my* heart, the admiration of all who knew her. She had received ſeveral overtures of marriage—unexceptionable offers; ſhe rejected them all, indiſcriminately. I left her choice perfectly free, certain that it could not err in its ſelection.

"One gentleman was ſo powerfully recommended to me, and had ſuch claims to notice, that I could not avoid aſking her, one morning, what were her objections to Mr. Melvil, that ſhe had diſcarded him?

him? Deep bluſhes overſpread her face. 'My dear mother, (ſaid ſhe,) I wiſhed for ſuch an opportunity as this to open my heart to you; I had not courage to begin the ſubject, for I fear—yes, I fear my deareſt mother will condemn me.'—'No, my love, (I replied,) it is impoſſible you ſhould ever deſerve it.'—'Ah! (ſaid ſhe,) 'your tender confidence deceives you: but I muſt unlock my boſom; I cannot longer retain a ſecret from the beſt of mothers.'

"She then frankly avowed her partiality for a young officer, whoſe mother ſometimes viſited me, a widow of reſpectability, but ſmall fortune; and this young ſoldier had little beſides his commiſſion to depend upon. I was ſhocked at the diſcloſure of this predilection. It could neither be agreeable to his mother nor me, for we could not aſſiſt them ſufficiently to warrant an union with comfort. I foreſaw either unhappineſs in a fruitleſs attachment, or miſery in an imprudent marriage.

"Poor Maria ſat trembling before me. I ſaw her agitation, and ſought to remove

it by kindneſs, and by a fair repreſentation of every difficulty that ſeemed to impede their mutual happineſs. She candidly confeſſed ſhe had not been blind to the imprudence of her choice, but that ſhe found inclination was not always under the control of reaſon.

" 'I am now,' ſaid ſhe, 'comparatively eaſy. My dear mother knows the ſituation of my heart: I ſhall have the benefit of her counſel; and if I find that heart ungovernable, and ſtill perſiſting in its attachment, I can ſafely promiſe you to govern my actions; and whatever I may ſuffer, either from his importunities or the impulſe of my own affections, I never will marry him without your approbation, and I hope you will not encourage any other man.'

" I embraced my dear child, and felt the painful ſtruggle two fond hearts muſt endure in the conflict between love and reaſon: but while I indulged the ſincereſt regret that prudence militated againſt *their* happineſs, the hand of Providence was pleaſed to ſhorten *their* ſufferings, and fix a barbed

a barbed arrow in *my* heart. A ſudden order arrived for the young officer to join his regiment without delay. It was a thunder-ſtroke: but they behaved with more fortitude than could be expected. They exchanged vows of conſtancy, and promiſed to wait, in the hope of better days and his promotion.

"He was inſtantly ordered abroad; and within ten weeks after, the dreadful intelligence reached his poor mother that he was killed in battle. Poor woman! Great were her ſufferings: but no language can deſcribe what my darling child endured. For three weeks I never quitted her bedſide: ſhe then gave ſymptoms of returning reaſon, and endeavoured to reconcile herſelf to the inevitable decree which had ſeparated them.

"Alas! the delicacy of her frame, the exquiſite ſenſibility of her mind, were unequal to ſuſtain the efforts of reaſon; ſhe ſunk under the conflict; and nine weeks after the fatal news arrived, my deareſt Maria, my only comfort, my *now* angel child, followed her unfortunate lover to the

the grave! Such was *their* bridal bed—ſuch the termination of all *my* hopes in this life!"

Here Madame Gaudry burſt into a torrent of tears, and the gentle-hearted Elinor ſincerely ſympathized with her. Both were ſpeechleſs for ſome time. At length the poor lady dried her eyes, and, after ſome heartfelt ſighs, reſumed her ſtory.

"It is needleſs to wound you," ſaid ſhe, "by a repetition of my ſorrows, nor can they be deſcribed. My good friend's unwearied attentions and pious remonſtrances preſerved me from deſpair and death. After ſome weeks of confinement I reſumed my occupation, and ſought, by continual employment, to leſſen the anguiſh of my mind. Time and reaſon *have* moderated my ſorrows, but nothing has the power to remove them.

"It is now eight years ſince I loſt my beloved child. She was juſt turned of eighteen. Your height, your voice, and a general air of reſemblance when you ſpoke, ſtruck me in the firſt hour of your coming

coming here, and from that moment endeared you to my heart.

"I ſhould have told you, that the lady who preſided in this houſe gave it up three years ſince, and I was perſuaded to continue it, which I have done, ſolely with a view to divert my mind from dwelling always on my diſtreſſes; for I have no one to be benefitted by my induſtry. But reſignation becomes a Chriſtian, and I endeavour to accommodate myſelf to my ſituation, and the duty I owe to thoſe ladies who are placed in my houſe.

"Thus you ſee, my dear Miſs Maſham, what a melancholy chain of events was attached to my family and myſelf; and from thence you may infer, that God purifies, by ſufferings, thoſe whom he loveth, and that there is a world of everlaſting happineſs reſerved for the unfortunate, who are good, and ſubmiſſive to the divine will!

"My darling child was a great writer, a tolerable poeteſs. I will one day ſhew you many of her writings. One poem, written

written to invite a friend into the country, I have in this drawer. You may read it at your leiſure."

Madame Gaudry gave Elinor the paper, and being exhauſted with talking, retired to her chamber. Elinor withdrew to hers, and unfolding the poem, read what follows:

TO AGNES:

AN INVITATION TO THE COUNTRY.

"Come, Agnes, let us ſeek the rural plain,
Where Peace leads on her cheerful band,
And Mirth, companion of the homely ſwain,
With lovely Innocence walks hand in hand.

"While with unnumber'd flocks the riſing hills,
With lowing herds the humble vallies ſound,
The voice of joy the whole creation fills,
And kind, prolific Nature ſmiles around.

"Parent of Spring, the genial Sun aſcends,
Before him April ſheds his balmy ſhowers,
And mild Favonius on his car attends,
And bounteous Flora ſtrews his path with flowers.

"Come, Agnes, let us ſeek the leafy grove,
Where Spring, to hail thee, puts on all her charms,
And through enamell'd meadows let us rove,
Or view the culture of the neighbouring farms.

"At

" At every ſtep behold the cowſlip bands,
The golden crowfoot, and the pale primroſe,
And where the powder'd thorn protection lends,
The modeſt violet neglected blows.

" What aromatic ſcents perfume the breeze!
What various bloſſoms pour their fragrance round!
How gay the liv'ry of the whiſp'ring trees!
How ſoft the verdant carpet o'er the ground!

" Come, Agnes, let us ſeek the limpid rill,
And liſten to the blackbird's artleſs lay,
Perch'd on the bending willow, loud and ſhrill,
He pours his wild notes through the neighb'ring ſpray.

" Beneath yon aged oak, whoſe ſpreading arm
Bathes its green honours in the ſtream below,
While buſy inſects o'er its current ſwarm,
Sportful and careleſs of their lurking foe:

" There on the ſloping margin we'll recline,
And watch the finny tyrants of the brook,
With patient hand ſuſpend the trembling line,
Or hide with gaudy plume the treacherous hook.

" See, from the ſedgy bank—ſecure retreat,
The crimſon-ſpotted trout with caution glide;
His greedy eye beholds the tempting bait
Delicious move along the gentle tide.

" He follows ſwift—he ſtrikes his deſtin'd prey—
Shall *Agnes* gaze upon the cruel ſcene?
Shall *her* ſoft fingers tear the ſteel away,
While purple drops diſtain the ruſhes green?

" Ah!

" Ah! no—ſome other object let us view;
The tear of pity drops upon thy cheek;
Yon wand'ring path with footſteps light purſue,
Or in the thicket Philomela ſeek.

" In peace we'll leave the harmleſs ſcaly breed
To baſk and wanton in the cheering ray,
To hide, unnotic'd, near the quiv'ring reed,
Or down the current unmoleſted ſtray.

" But now the ſun declines, the proſpect fades,
Sweet eve, with dewy ſteps, advances ſlow;
See, on the plain ſtretch'd out, the lengthen'd ſhades—
With gold and purple ſee the mountains glow!

" Behind yon hill the full-orb'd Moon appears;
In miſty clouds ſhe veils her modeſt light;
Reſplendent now her ſilver face ſhe rears,
And ſpreads her glories o'er the robe of Night.

" Now is the time to liſten to the ſong
Of Philomela, echoing through the grove:
Hark, how the breeze conveys her notes along,
Which tune the ſoul to harmony and love!

" Sweet bird! from folly's noiſe retired far,
May no rude hand diſturb thy thorny neſt;
Ah! warble ſtill to my delighted ear,
And ſooth the anguiſh of a troubled breaſt.

" MARIA."

Elinor

Elinor was very greatly affected by the melancholy ſtory of Madame Gaudry, and tenderly lamented the fate of the unfortunate lovers. Their ſtory revived all her former ideas of heroic love; and, by a natural tranſition, her thoughts fell on Lord L * * *, the unhappy ſtate of his mind, the reſolution ſhe had adopted of living ſingle, and making a generous ſacrifice to his affection, by refuſing every other man.

This affecting ſtory, thought ſhe, and my own ſingular fate, proves, beyond contradiction, that this world abounds with extraordinary incidents, little leſs romantic than thoſe hiſtories which the counteſs aſſures me are all fabulous. But I ſee that we need not have recourſe to fiction for great misfortunes, or the painful hiſtory of the heart. Alas! my throbbing boſom too forcibly reminds me of "my ill-ſtarred deſtiny." Prophetic words! Never to be forgotten!

She fell into a melancholy reverie, till rouſed by the entrance of her young friends, (or rather companions; the other

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is a proſtituted word, much oftener uſed than underſtood,) one of whom brought her a letter from her dear Lady B * *, containing information of a moſt unpleaſant kind.

"Lord L * * * was returned to London, after poorly recovering from a violent fit of illneſs at Paris, which he choſe to have concealed from his parents." The phyſicians there ſaw the mind was diſturbed, and the root of the diſeaſe fixed there beyond their power to eradicate. Inſtead, therefore, of ordering him to the ſouth, they adviſed his return to England; and the young lord his companion, no ſtranger to the feelings of his heart, joined ſo earneſtly in the advice, that he conſented to obey them.

He arrived in London, but fatigue and anxiety made him extremely weak; and he had been there a fortnight before this intelligence reached his afflicted parents. The whole of this information was not ſent to them, nor of courſe known to Elinor: but Lady B * * told her they were on the wing for London; adding, "We are not

the

the only afflicted parents: Mr. Tudor, the baron's ſon, lies dangerouſly ill in conſequence of a duel between him and counſellor Mellor." She concluded with a thouſand kind and affectionate wiſhes for Elinor, and promiſed to write the firſt moment in her power after her arrival in London.

This letter, at ſuch a moment, when her heart had been ſoftened by hearing the misfortunes of others, and in the contemplation of her own, was too much for Elinor to ſupport. All her heroiſm and fortitude gave way on the knowledge of Lord L * * *'s illneſs. Ah! how did ſhe regret not being admitted as a partner in the journey! How eagerly would ſhe have flown to ſooth and ſupport him! Till this moment ſhe knew not the height of her affection. "Ah! poor Maria!" exclaimed ſhe, weeping, "I ſhall ſoon follow you to the grave if Lord L * * * dies."

She read over the fatal letter again; and every time her fears increaſed, his danger was magnified, and her wretchedneſs con-

firmed. In this hopeleſs ſtate we are ſorry to leave her: but it is neceſſary to carry our readers back, to look a little after Mr. Tudor, who arrived at the village of Hanwell in due time, perfectly ſafe. Here he was welcomed by Mrs. Mellor with all the external marks of a violent paſſion.

He wrote to his father that he had left Scotland, but gave no intimation of his place of reſidence. This letter, however, for a time ſuſpended the baron's journey: but he had a ſpy upon Elinor, to watch all her motions. The king going to Hampton-Court, the baron attended him. He had been there only a few days before he received another expreſs from his lady, who was then in London. She wrote as follows:

"It is fated, my lord, that I am to be the meſſenger of ill news. Yeſterday Dr. Moore did me the favour of a viſit, and after ſome precaution, informed me that George was dangerouſly wounded in a duel; that horrid Iriſhman having found him again with his wife at the village of Hanwell.

Hanwell. He added, that the wounds were examined and dreſſed; that it was impoſſible to ſay what the reſult might be; and though no immediate danger was to be apprehended, he thought it beſt that I ſhould ſee him. I ſet off directly, and found the poor fellow in a terrible way. That implacable wretch had given him three deſperate wounds, and, it ſeems, has alſo inſtituted a proceſs againſt him. Mrs. Mellor was with him. She withdrew on my entrance, but I ſaw ſhe was an elegant, beautiful woman; though to be ſure it was an extreme piece of folly in George to live ſo openly with her, and to be detected again by the huſband. But he pays ſeverely for it. This morning I find he had a reſtleſs night, and is poorly; I therefore ſend to you without delay, that you may haſten up. I am now going to viſit him.

"Yours,

"A. M. P * * *."

This faſhionable lady's faſhionable letter reached the baron when his head and heart were fully occupied with very intereſting buſineſs.

buſineſs. "Curſe on the boy's folly!" exclaimed he, paſſionately. "I have been bitterly puniſhed for my extreme weakneſs, my anxious deſire of a ſon: but I muſt go up to him."

He waited on his majeſty, who lamented the accident, and deſired he would uſe his own will as to the time of abſence, and hoped he would find his ſon out of danger.

He was in his apartment, preparing inſtantly to leave the court, when his valet entered, followed by a lady, whoſe preſence overwhelmed him with confuſion and terror.

"How, madam!" ſaid he; "have you no recollection of the tenor of your bond?"—"I have," ſaid ſhe: "but circumſtances the moſt diſtreſsful brought me here." She then proceeded to relate the cauſe of her intruſion—a buſineſs which the reader muſt be contented to remain in ignorance of a little time longer.

The baron heard her with no great cordiality; and it was not the firſt time in his life that he heartily wiſhed he had never

ſeen

ſeen her face. He was, however, obliged to compromiſe matters with her; and by a ſeeming concurrence with her wiſhes, and a promiſe of writing to her, he got rid of a perſon he now hated more than ever he had loved her.

He ſoon followed, and arrived at the houſe where his ſon was confined to his bed, and could not refrain from upbraiding him, notwithſtanding his weak ſtate. In about four days, however, he was pronounced out of danger; and in that time the baron was entirely taken up in meditating on the plan he had for ſome time been arranging in his mind.

He told his ſon, that, ſick of his follies and extravagancies, he was determined he ſhould marry; that Lady Suſan Delmaney was an heireſs to immenſe property, highly accompliſhed, if not handſome; that he might live with her decently if he could not love her, and her fortune would enable them to live in ſplendor.

Mr. Tudor made ſome faint objections. They were over-ruled by the father; and

at length they agreed on the marriage, with this condition on the part of Mr. Tudor, that the buſineſs ſhould be kept a profound ſecret till he could handſomely get rid of Mrs. Mellor. The baron readily acceded to the ſtipulation, and rejoiced to have got over one of the difficulties that he feared would have impeded his grand plan of operations.

Mean time the vindictive counſellor purſued his revenge, and the proceſs commenced againſt Mr. Tudor for the ſeduction of his wife. Such proſecutions were neither ſo common nor faſhionable in thoſe days as in our more poliſhed times. A huſband was ſeldom known to be a pander to the vices of his wife, or join in a colluſion to ſhare the damages, and enjoy their ſeparate pleaſures.

Fathers did not conſider a miſtreſs as a neceſſary appendage in the eſtabliſhment made for a ſon's ſuite; nor was it any violent recommendation to a young lady that her lover had paid five thouſand pounds damages for the pleaſure of deſtroying domeſtic peace, branding a woman with infamy

famy and diſgrace, wounding a huſband in his moſt vulnerable part, and entailing ſuſpicion and unjuſt contempt on the innocent children of a worthleſs mother.

No—ſuch capital ſtrokes of gallantry, ſuch ſuperior guilt and refined exceſs in intrigue were reſerved for our more modern and enlightened times, when virtue is put out of countenance by the bold preſumption of vice, and modeſt worth ſhrinks from the aſſuming inſolence of audacious loquacity, unequal to a conteſt with the "rattling tongue of ſaucy eloquence."

Such being the *ignorance* and *cowardice* of thoſe times we are taking our hiſtory from, the baron was extremely alarmed leſt Lady Suſan ſhould hear of this proceſs, and, in conſequence of it, refuſe the hand of the *gallant* and *honourable* Mr. Tudor. But here again he was favoured by fortune.

The young lady had no parents living; ſhe reſided with her brother and an old aunt. The baron had made overtures for his ſon; he was declared the king's favourite;

vourite; the ſon muſt have a fine fortune, great intereſt, and almoſt any title he pleaſed. The offer was accepted: but as Mr. Tudor was not expected to be quite well for a few weeks to come, the brother of the lady went to Italy, confiding the marriage buſineſs to his aunt, who, having ſome affairs that called her into the north, took her niece with her.

This was extremely lucky. Women, in thoſe barbarous days, were not politicians; they ſeldom read trials, or concerned themſelves with affairs of ſtate or ſuits at law. The damages of three thouſand pounds were awarded againſt Mr. Tudor, and a bill of divorce between the counſellor and his lady paſſed, without Lady Suſan knowing a word of the tranſaction; and when ſhe returned to London, the novelty of the affair was pretty well over, and nobody but the perſons immediately concerned remembered the buſineſs.

Things were in this train when the earl and counteſs came poſt to London to ſee their beloved and invaluable ſon, whom they found ſo weak and ſo emaciated, that both

both were ready to expire with grief. The pride of birth, the boaſt of anceſtry, and the claims of poſterity, (ridiculous pretenſions!) all ſunk before the dreadful apprehenſion of loſing their darling and deſerving child.

The very firſt night of their arrival they held a conſultation, and after weighing every circumſtance fairly, the counteſs was allowed to tell her ſon that they had a plan in view, to make him happy in the poſſeſſion of the woman he loved.

This was a ſpecific remedy to cheer his ſpirits, and ſupport him in the ſtruggle for life, once more become eſtimable in his eyes, if it could be devoted to procure felicity to the ever dear and charming Elinor. His mother requeſted every thing might be left to her management, and that ſhe might be permitted to negotiate the buſineſs in her own way. This requeſt was readily acceded to by the earl and his ſon, and that very evening ſhe wrote to Elinor.

This amiable young woman had, unhappily and involuntarily, ſuffered an in-

creaſing dejection to ſteal on her ſpirits, to the great inquietude of Madame Gaudry, who very ſincerely loved her, and who exerted all her talents and affectionate endeavours to amuſe her, and drive from her mind thoſe melancholy thoughts which tended to deſtroy her health. But all was in vain. Elinor was grateful and obliging. The patient endurance of her character enabled her to ſmile when her heart was oppreſſed—to admit the civilities of her companions when ſhe panted to be alone. But though ſhe ſtruggled to preſerve an *appearance* of cheerfulneſs, not one ray of ſunſhine, not a gleam of pleaſure, nor hope, nor tranquillity dwelt in her boſom.

Elinor was no longer the child of uncultivated Nature. The expanſion of her mind, the nature of her ſtudies, the information gained from ſociety, had altogether given her a knowledge of the world, that ſerved to ſhew her, moſt forcibly, the unfortunate ſituation in which ſhe was placed, and to feel that ſituation more painful, from a conviction

conviction that a marriage with her would be diſgraceful to Lord L * * *.

Formerly ſhe knew not the proud diſtinctions in ſociety. Her friend and benefactreſs, the former counteſs, kept no company; Mr. Maſham and herſelf were conſidered in every reſpect as on an equality with her. Her favourite ſtudies had told her but of two orders of people: princes, who were knights, attended by their ſquires—princeſſes, who were heroines, with their confidantes; the others, ſhepherds and ſhepherdeſſes, goatherds, and domeſtics.

Knowing her ſituation ſuperior to the latter, ſhe believed herſelf on an equality with the former; and on her firſt interview with Lord L * * *, ſhe was aſſured that he was one of her favourite heroes in diſguiſe, obliged, perhaps, to fly from ſome great, wicked tyrant.

Such were her firſt ideas; and for ſome time after, when ſhe knew him to be the ſon of Lord B * *, ſhe never once feared any diſtinction of birth would ſeparate them. She only dreaded his inconſtancy,

or that his parents might have otherwiſe engaged him.

The diſcovery that followed, the myſtery that was attached to her birth, and the impertinent vulgar obſervations and pity which Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm ſaluted her with, firſt taught her to think *that* circumſtance a *diſgrace*, which before ſhe had only conſidered as a *misfortune*; and from that time, ſubſequent incidents and inſults made a deep impreſſion on her mind.

But it was not until ſhe had reſided with Madame Gaudry that ſhe was convinced ſhe was *unworthy*, in the eyes of the world, of being Lord L * * *'s wife. The objection of his parents to their union ſhe conceived to ariſe from their predilection for ſome other object, whoſe fortune and connections were *more deſirable*; not that ſhe would diſgrace and degrade him in the world, if his parents approved of their marriage.

His letter to her, and the ſubſequent behaviour of his parents, aſſured her they had inſurmountable objections to the connexion; and her native pride of heart,

and

and a regard for their peace, induced her to leave B * *-caſtle, and only to *lament* that the affection the counteſs ſo often profeſſed, and ſo dear to her, was not ſtrong enough to give her thoſe natural claims to the title of *daughter*, by which appellation her friend ſo frequently called her.

Such were the ſentiments of Elinor, until ſhe had been ſome time a reſident with Madame Gaudry. The information obtained in a courſe of reading, by converſation with her companions and occaſional viſitors, opened her eyes at once to the extent of her misfortunes; and being now too proud, too juſt, and too much attached to her lover to form a wiſh of becoming his wife, ſhe gave herſelf up to deſpair.

"Ah!" ſaid ſhe, "deareſt Lord L * * *! this unfortunate 'nobody knows who' will ſubmit to her 'ill-ſtarred deſtiny'—ſhe will gladly give up a life of conſequence to no one; and when ſhe is no more, you and your beloved parents may be happy."

She was one morning ſitting very low and melancholy in ſpirits, when the anxiouſly-expected letter from the counteſs was brought to her. She almoſt feared to break the ſeal, ſo great were her apprehenſions for the health of Lord L * * *. The firſt lines gave her different emotions. Her joy was proportionably great to the terror that had invaded her heart. But how great was her ſurpriſe to read what follows:

"After having communicated to my beloved Elinor ſome ſhare in that joy which dilates our hearts, in the hope of our dear Edward's reſtored health, I have to offer to your conſideration a propoſal, your concurrence in which will, I truſt, ultimately inſure happineſs to us all.

"The circumſtances of your birth, my dear child, ſo involved in myſtery, we wiſh, if poſſible, to elucidate. That you are the offspring of mean parents I cannot believe; and it is poſſible that at this moment you may have a mother, who would gladly

gladly fold you to her boſom, did not ſome particular cauſes exiſt to ſeparate you. It may alſo be, that your parents know not of your exiſtence.

" In ſhort, my love, both the earl and myſelf are of opinion, that it would be very proper to draw up an advertiſement for circulation, to this purport—' That in ſuch a year a female child was entruſted to the care of a clergyman, under ſtrict vows of ſecrecy, duly obſerved by him, ſince even after his death no proofs had appeared to enable any one to trace the origin of a very amiable young lady, who has in her poſſeſſion a coral mounted in gold, a gold pap-ſpoon, and a ſuperb diamond ring, which, it is ſuppoſed, were given with her, or to her, by the authors of her being. The young lady has now an independent fortune. It is not pecuniary views that have drawn forth this advertiſement, but the anxiety of a friend, deeply intereſted in the happineſs of an ineſtimable young woman, who has reaſons of the moſt important nature for being de-

ſirous to have this myſterious tranſaction explained.'

"Now, my dear Elinor, we think there is great room to hope the execution of this plan may produce the diſcovery we wiſh for; and I am ſanguine in my expectations, that if a diſcovery ſhould enſue, it will be productive of joy and pleaſure to us all. If it does not, we hazard nothing: you will not be known as concerned in the tranſaction, and the myſtery muſt remain as before."

The counteſs concluded with very many affectionate expreſſions of "conſtant love and eſteem for her ſweet young friend."

Elinor conſidered this (to her) extraordinary propoſal for ſome time. She revolved in her mind what could be the circumſtances, what the motives, that could induce the counteſs to adopt this plan, from which ſhe hoped ſo much, at this particular period; and after mature conſideration, ſhe began to open her eyes to the true cauſes that inſtigated the inquiry.

"I ſee," ſaid ſhe, "that poor Lord L * * * has fretted himſelf ill on my account.

account. They are afraid of having him degraded, but they fear alſo for his life; and to reconcile the two, they would diſcover my birth: either that I owe my origin to no mean people, or that a confirmation of my original meanneſs may juſtify their refuſal, and incline him to reſign all thoughts of me."

She felt proud and indignant. "And ſhall I," continued ſhe, "thus advertiſe myſelf, thus obtrude and force myſelf upon parents who deſerted and diſclaimed me? No. Though I would give worlds to ſee, to know thoſe cruel or unhappy parents, I will not alarm them; I will not force them, againſt inclination, to own me, or torture them with apprehenſions that their ſecret may be diſcovered; and after all I might prove to be unworthy of Lord L * * *, by birth and connexion, and diſtreſs myſelf and others by a uſeleſs curioſity. No; I will *not* conſent to this plan, raiſed by family pride, to gratify the prejudices of the world."

She wrote immediately to the counteſs, ſtating her reaſons for rejecting the propoſed

poſed plan in very forcible language. She was no longer the ſimple, uninformed Elinor, who ſubſcribed implicitly to the judgment of others; ſhe had learnt to think and judge for herſelf; and her deciſions being guided by an upright heart, a ſteady judgment, and a mind unadulterated by the ſelfiſh maxims of the world, ſhe was juſtified in her arguments and concluſions by reaſon and prudence.

It is true ſhe made this ſacrifice to judgment at the expence of her heart. She ſighed, ſhe ſhed tears in the bitter certainty that ſhe could be nothing to Lord L * * *; that poſſibly ſhe might never ſee him more. But his health was getting better; he would ſoon be reconciled to what was irremediable; and the ſame ſpirit of family pride which reigned in the boſom of his parents, would in time have its due weight with him.

For herſelf, ſhe had no cares; ſhe wiſhed to paſs her days with Madame Gaudry, whether happy or unhappy. From *her* ſympathiſing heart ſhe was ſure to experience a participation which muſt afford her

her comfort, for the *ſhort time, perhaps,* ſhe had to live.

In this kind of hopeleſs reſignation we ſhall leave her, and return to our friends in London.

Mr. Tudor at length recovered from his wounds; Lady Suſan Delmaney was returned with her aunt; the damages for the loſs of his wife's honour were paid to counſellor Mellor, though very reluctantly, by the baron, who, if he had not then other ſchemes in view, would ſooner have ſeen his ſon an exile than have parted with ſo much money.

The counſellor having ſatisfied his honour by the wounds of Tudor, and lined his pockets with the baron's gold, left his wife to her fate, and returned to Ireland rich, and without any incumbrance.

At the requeſt of her lover, Mrs. Mellor retired to Bath to wait for him, as he had promiſed to join her ſoon, and go abroad with her to France. The baron ſaw all his wiſhes in a fair way to be crowned. He agreed to reſign over a handſome eſtate to his ſon, when the marriage articles were ſigned;

ſigned; to ſettle handſomely on the lady, and procure a title for Mr. Tudor, by a new creation for himſelf, which the king had promiſed.

Lady P * * * conſtantly viſited the earl and counteſs, Lord L * * * was in a convaleſcent ſtate, and Elinor's anſwer was anxiouſly expected by the family; though the contents of the letter ſent to her were known only to the earl.

Such was the ſituation of affairs of both families. The writings and ſettlements were now nearly finiſhed, and Mr. Tudor's wedding was to take place within a week; when one day a letter was delivered to the baron, whilſt at dinner with his lady and ſon. He had no ſooner run his eyes over it, than throwing down the letter in a rage little ſhort of madneſs, he diſcharged a volley of oaths, and bid his ſon read, and anſwer that infamous falſehood.

Before the other could have ſeen three words he turned as pale as death. The baron furiouſly called for Mr. Tudor's valet. He came trembling and aghaſt. "Tell me," cried the enraged father; "ſpeak

"ſpeak the truth, or, by Heaven, this is your laſt hour—is your maſter married? Did *you* witneſs the ceremony between him and that curſed woman Mellor?"

The man fell on his knees; "Forgive me, my lord," ſaid he, "forgive me; I was obliged to obey my maſter. I confeſs I *did ſee them married*: I fetched the clergyman by his order, and the lady's maid and myſelf were preſent."

"Then I am undone," cried the baron. "Riſe, wretch, and begone! And thou, baſe, contemptible betrayer, deceiver of thy father, a villain to an unoffending woman, who had conſented to honour thee beyond thy deſerts or hopes! what haſt thou to ſay in palliation of thy vile duplicity?"

Mr. Tudor, who ſaw all ſubterfuge was vain—that the letter from the *ci-devant* Mrs. Mellor, now really his wife, had developed the whole tranſaction he had ſought to hide—gathering a kind of deſperate courage from neceſſity, "Spare this language, my lord," ſaid he, "and hear me with patience." He then confeſſed

ſeſſed that Mrs. Mellor, taking advantage of him in an hour of fondneſs, had ſeduced him into a written promiſe of marriage, if ſhe was divorced, under a penalty of twenty thouſand pounds. He had then no idea Mr. Mellor would have ſerved him with a proceſs; that during his illneſs ſhe had attended him with unwearied care; and when the divorce took place, and ſhe claimed his promiſe, or payment of the bond, being deſperate, from a certainty that his father never would pay the penalty, in a moment of madneſs and intoxication he conſented to marry her, on her engagement never to diſcloſe the marriage but with his previous conſent.

He added, that he did propoſe, on his marriage with Lady Suſan, to have raiſed twenty thouſand pounds, and he had no doubt of ſilencing his wife, and ſending her to a diſtant kingdom, with this ſum.

Here he concluded his confeſſion, with a little variation from truth, indeed, in the *latter* part. That he had hoped, by money, to ſilence his wife, was true: but it was not his intention to part *with* her; and

and he had ſecretly determined, that very day, to give her ſuch hopes of future affluence as he thought would prevent her from interrupting him in his deſign on Lady Suſan's fortune; and he was much puzzled to gueſs from what quarter ſhe had her intelligence.

In truth the informant was his own valet, who was a creature of hers, and a ſpy upon every action; and to him ſhe was indebted for her knowledge of his attachment to Elinor, which produced the letter that called him from Edinburgh. But this was not the only obligation Mr. Tudor owed to his valet. He was a friend to the counſellor's valet: and when his maſter joined his dulcinèa at the village, *this faithful* confidant had written to *his no leſs faithful* friend; the conſequence of which was the duel that endangered Tudor's life, and ultimately brought about the fatal marriage that ruined all his proſpects.

Every thing, however, that related to the perfidy of his ſervant, Mr. Tudor was as ignorant of as the baron, therefore he had

had no clue to trace the informant of his amiable wife.

The baron heard him with a ſort of ſtupidity, a vacant wild ſtare, that denoted a wandering, diſturbed mind: but when he ſtopped ſpeaking, the exclamations of Lady P * * * againſt his folly, and the impudence of the wicked woman who had enſnared him, called the baron to ſudden recollection. "Unhappy boy!" ſaid he, "thou art completely undone. Tenfold will be the puniſhment of *thy* folly, and thou art the ſevere monitor to ſpeak daggers to my heart. Leave the houſe," added he, ſtamping furiouſly; "ſeek out a lodging. Let thy fellow leave word where thou art to be found; in a day or two you may hear from me again. I muſt firſt ſee Lady Suſan, and take ſhame to myſelf for having given exiſtence to ſuch a worthleſs being."

Mr. Tudor gladly withdrew from his father's preſence. Lady P * * * began to lament her diſappointment in her daughter-in-law, whoſe family, fortune, and connexions, ſhe thought, would reſtore the conſe-

conſequence ſhe had loſt by her own diſſipations.

She proteſted ſhe never would ſee her ſon's wife, whom ſhe loaded moſt plentifully with abuſe. The baron lifted up his head. "Your pride is hurt," ſaid he, "but not your heart. Indeed why ſhould it? *I* only am to blame; *I* only am the ſufferer."

He roſe and left her. He withdrew to his library; he wrote to Lady Suſan, to her aunt, and to her brother; he was, to all appearance as to intention, innocent: but his heart ſmote him as culpable, and as having purſued a ſyſtem of deceit which was retorted on his own head.

He endeavoured, however, to exculpate himſelf, and congratulated them on the diſcovery of this villany, to which Lady Suſan had nearly become a victim.

It is now become neceſſary to enter more largely into the hiſtory of Baron P * * *, though ſome circumſtances are not yet ripe for elucidation.

In the early part of his life he had been on a viſit with a friend in Wales, previous

to his knowledge of Miſs Meredith, his preſent lady. This friend lived near the parſonage-houſe, where an honeſt-hearted worthy curate reſided, with a wife and five daughters, all of whom were ſupported on the income of twenty pounds a year, and the caſual bounty of the lord of the manor.

The honourable Mr. Tudor (for he was not then Baron P * * *) having not long been emancipated from his preceptor, gladly availed himſelf of an invitation that made him, for the firſt time, his own maſter.

On the morning after his arrival, he accompanied his friend on a ramble, who accidentally called in on Mr. Glendower, the poor, unknown man of real merit, who did the laborious duty of three pariſhes for twenty pounds yearly, whilſt the rector received four hundred a year for the trouble of enjoying all the good things of this life in his elbow chair, from whence his pampered body roſe only to mount his nag for an appetite to his dinner, and return at night to his warm bed, after the fatigues of eating, and the labours of the back-

back-gammon table; to which two or three of his paraſites daily attended in turn, at the mandate of the holy man.

The poor curate had five daughters, the eldeſt about ſixteen, lovely and blooming as the opening roſe, innocent as a dove, and as unknowing of the world as if ſhe had lived in a deſart. Poor Ellen attracted the eyes and *inclinations* (we do not ſay the *heart*, though they are often blended in the ſame idea, without the leaſt affinity to each other) of the honourable Mr. Tudor, and he directly marked her for his own.

The ſeduction of a poor curate's ignorant daughter has been too often deſcribed in modern novels to require from us an account of the progreſs and completion of his deſign. Her very innocence, by the ſkill of her artful ſeducer, was made ſubſervient to his wiſhes, and poor Ellen was completely undone before ſhe was ſenſible that ſhe had done wrong.

At this period, very opportunely, Mr. Tudor's father went to London with an addreſs to the king, and his ſon received an

an order to join him there. Nothing could be more welcome than this mandate. He repaired to the houſe of Mr. Glendower, after having privately tutored Ellen, to acquaint them with his intended journey; this "*kind* and *worthy* gentleman," who had often preſented the good curate and his family with preſents, "more ſuited to their delicacy and frugal wants, than to his fortune and friendly wiſhes." Such was the language of the guileful betrayer.

This kind friend, after lamenting the neceſſity of his quitting ſuch worthy acquaintance, told them, he would ſpeak to his mother and to her houſekeeper in behalf of Ellen, and poſſibly they might either take her into the family, or recommend her to a good ſituation, where ſhe might not only do for herſelf, but aſſiſt in clothing her ſiſters.

The worthy unſuſpicious couple gratefully acknowledged his kindneſs, and beſtowed a thouſand bleſſings on the good young man, whom Providence had ſent to ſerve their family.

He

He was ſoon in London, and, like an adept in vice, he procured a woman to write, as the houſekeeper, and in the name of his mother, ſaying "that the amiable character which her ſon had given of Mr. Glendower's family induced her to take Ellen under her protection, who might be ſent up in the waggon, and would be met, at the inn in London, by the houſekeeper; and if Ellen behaved well, ſhe hoped, in time, ſhe might be able to procure good ſituations for her ſiſters, as they came of an age to go abroad in the world."

He had taken all his meaſures ſo completely, that Mr. Glendower, whoſe own heart was guileleſs, never entertained one thought, one doubt of the honour of Mr. Tudor; and though to part with their dear Ellen was a painful ſtroke, yet it was their duty to conſult her intereſt; and they hoped, when ſhe returned with the family into Wales, ſhe might be permitted to come and ſee them.

They endeavoured, therefore, to comfort Ellen, to dry their own tears, to prevent hers from flowing, and to mitigate

the ſorrow which appeared in her dejected countenance, though ſhe accepted the offer with every appearance of joy. They parted with a ſuppreſſed reluctance on both ſides. The good man gave her leſſons for her conduct, and on his knees invoked the bleſſings of Heaven on his child and her benefactors, with prayers for the health and preſervation of his darling Ellen.

Drowned in tears, the poor girl ſeated herſelf in one corner of the waggon, freely to indulge that ſorrow and ſhame ſhe felt for having deceived her dear parents, and joining in a ſeries of falſehoods to impoſe upon their love and confidence.

Many times ſhe was about to fall on her knees, and confeſs her errors: but to give them ſuch a dreadful ſtroke, to deprive them of a friend, and be left herſelf to ſhame and reproach, by diſobliging Mr. Tudor, were conſiderations that as often withheld her; and *now* ſhe was too far gone in the ſcheme to hope for pardon; nor had ſhe courage to face the parents whoſe affection ſhe had betrayed.

Over-

Overwhelmed with anguiſh, ſhe proceeded on her journey, and arrived at the inn, where a *fine dreſſed lady*, in the eyes of Ellen, waited to receive her. She was taken to a fine houſe, ſeated at table with the lady, who treated her with ſuch familiar kindneſs, that regret and ſorrow began inſenſibly to decreaſe; and when, in the evening, Mr. Tudor flew to embrace and welcome his dear Ellen to London, nothing was remembered but his affection, which ſeemed a full compenſation for every ſacrifice ſhe had made.

Letters, in proper time, were written, and preſents ſent to the parents of Ellen (as her lover, in the height of his fondneſs, was not a niggard of his money); ſhe had handſome lodgings, handſome clothes, and a ſervant to attend on her; her beauty daily improved, and ſhe was, in her own opinion, very happy.

A fright which ſhe received in the ſtreet, by a horſe falling cloſe to her, and throwing his rider, cauſed a premature labour; from which, however, ſhe ſoon recovered: but during her confinement her lover loſt

his father, juſt as he had procured a place at court for his ſon.

This event cauſed a great alteration in affairs in a ſhort time. Mr. Tudor, now Baron P * * *, was lord of the bed-chamber to the king; his mother retired to live upon her jointured eſtate in Glouceſterſhire; and it was neceſſary to make a new repreſentation to Ellen's parents, leſt they ſhould make inquiries in that county.

They were informed ſhe now lived with an old lady of large fortune, who had taken a fancy to her; and as Ellen had now a houſe of her own, and paſſed for a married woman, letters were addreſſed to her by her aſſumed name, as if permitted by her lady, to ſave poſtage.

The baron went down to ſhew himſelf among his tenantry, and take poſſeſſion of his eſtates. It was at this time that he firſt ſaw Miſs Meredith, who was then the toaſt of the county, but by a careful mother had been ſo much kept up from all male acquaintance, that till nearly about this period ſhe had ſcarcely been ſeen, except

except by the very few families near them. The wary old lady, knowing ſhe was heireſs to an immenſe property, guarded her from improper connexions, until, by the will of her father and uncle, ſhe became her own miſtreſs at eighteen.

The baron, charmed with her beauty, and enchanted with her fortune, loſt no time in making propoſals in form. The offer was ſeducing. He was young, handſome, a title, and lord of the bed-chamber. His character was inquired into—"a little faſhionably diſſipated—was ſuppoſed to keep a miſtreſs:"—but what were ſuch charges in the balance againſt his preponderating *agrêmens*, with a young lady who wanted to ſee the great world?

In ſhort, they were married, and the bride brought to London in great ſtate, where, for a time, they were the happieſt, handſomeſt, and moſt opulent peer and peereſs that then graced the court.

The baron's marriage could not be concealed from Miſs Glendower; he therefore braved the ſtorm himſelf, and bore all the faintings, reproaches, tears, and

complaints, with tolerable fortitude, though he was not unaffected; for Ellen's fondneſs, good-nature, and prudent conduct had certainly gained a much greater influence over his heart than might have been expected from his character, and her beauty was rather improved than impaired.

After the firſt ſhock was over, when ſhe repulſed his embrace, and cried in the moſt moving tone—"No, no, my lord, you no longer love the unhappy Ellen; you are married; duty and honour forbid your further intimacy with me. Alas! what is to become of me? What am I to do? Where muſt I go now?"

"Here, in my arms, in my boſom, deareſt girl, you dwell for ever." He then, with all the ſophiſtry and inſinuating eloquence he was maſter of, convinced her of the obligation he was under to marry; that the fortuue of his wife was his principal inducement; that her (Ellen's) rights were ſuperior to his wife's; and that while he behaved with decency to the latter, ſhe would have no reaſon to complain;

complain; and his dear Ellen ſhould ſtill remain miſtreſs of him and his newly-acquired fortune.

Alas! how unequal was an affectionate, artleſs, uninformed, and already undone girl of ſeventeen, to enter the liſts againſt the man ſhe loved, and whoſe all-perſuaſive arguments, entreaties, and endearments might have ſucceeded with one of more knowledge than poor Ellen poſſeſſed? In ſhort, he conquered; all her ſcruples were ſubdued, and ſhe yielded to ſhare his heart and fortune with a rival.

Lady P * * * ſoon perceived an abatement in her lord's affections. At firſt ſhe wept in ſecret: then followed tender complaints; at length reproaches: but finding neither were much regarded, though he affected to "wonder what cauſe ſhe had to be diſſatisfied, when it was his ſtudy to oblige and to amuſe her." Initiated into *good* company, by which term is underſtood perſons of faſhion and diſſipation, who, ſuperior to the ſtupid forms of decorum and regard to character, attached to little vulgar ſouls, (who have not the audacity to ſoar

above contempt and loſs of reputation,) give themſelves up boldly to unbounded exceſſes, and while they eſcape detection, look with ſcorn on the unfortunate wretches whom poverty, ignorance, and ſituation have ſeduced into vice, whilſt the more abandoned roll in their chariots, and glory in their ſhame.

With ſome ſuch faſhionable females of *their day* Lady P * * * ſoon learnt to be perfectly eaſy reſpecting her huſband; and though he conducted himſelf towards *her* with civility, and was really *fond* of Ellen, yet variety was his delight, and his character for intrigue increaſed as he grew older.

A very large portion of his wife's fortune, after her death, was entailed on the male heirs, and would be loſt to his family, without a ſon to inherit. Lady P * * * bore him two daughters, to his great mortification. Both died young. Ellen had alſo a daughter, who died, at two years old, of the ſmall-pox. He was almoſt diſtracted with vexation that no ſon was granted to his wiſhes. Such an event would

would have enabled him to cut down timber that groaned for the axe, and realize a ſum of money, which would be very acceptable.

While he was thus diſcontented and tormented, the much-deſired bleſſing, which then gratified all his wiſhes, was granted. But of this we muſt ſpeak in another place. We ſhall now reſume this hiſtory where we broke off, to introduce the epiſode of the baron's ſtory in early life, which will be found neceſſary to elucidate facts that will ſoon come before us.

We left the baron juſt finiſhing his letters to Lady Suſan and her family, and under all the tortures of a man who had been labouring for years to raiſe a fabric that ſhould ſtamp him with reputation and glory, and who, in one moment, ſaw the fairy edifice of his creation tumble into ruins, and at once overturn all the ſchemes of an anxious life.

Whilſt he paſſed a ſleepleſs night, debating on which ſide to ſteer his courſe, execrating his worthleſs ſon, whoſe conduct had proved ruinous to all his long-

certed views; that ſon, furious with his diſappointment, enraged at the detection of his abſurd marriage, and fearful of the conſequences in the baron's diſpleaſure, fled from the houſe of his father to a hotel in the neighbourhood, where he ſent for his valet to attend him.

The fellow obeyed with reluctance: but not knowing how the affair would terminate, he was too cunning to throw off his allegiance at once. Mr. Tudor had looked ſlightly over the letter that had ſo miſchievouſly broken in upon the completion of his intended marriage; he knew not the hand-writing, but it announced his union with Mrs. Mellor, and that his valet was a witneſs to the ceremony, with the name of the clergyman who performed it. Who could have given this intelligence he could not conceive. He had not the ſmalleſt ſuſpicion that his wife would have taken ſuch a ſtep.

When his valet appeared before him, after liberally curſing him for being ſo ſuddenly drawn into a confeſſion, he inquired if he could gueſs at the quarter from

from whence the information was derived. The man proteſted his utter ignorance, but hoped that after a little time the baron's anger would abate, and a reconciliation take place.

Mr. Tudor had no ſuch hopes. He knew his father's temper too well to believe he would forgive the deſtruction of a ſcheme he had ſet his heart on, and a duplicity which threw him into a diſagreeable predicament with a family of rank and conſequence. Of pardon from the baron, or being reſtored to his favour, he reſigned every expectation, and had no doubt but his allowance would be withdrawn, and that diſgrace and poverty, for a time, would be his portion.

One only conſolation remained; great part of his mother's eſtates were entailed; of them they had not the power to deprive him, they were unalienable; and for preſent ſupport, if denied it by his family, he muſt raiſe money on his reverſionary proſpects.

This only alleviation to his diſappointments was a very ſolitary one. He curſed

the hour in which he firſt became acquainted with Mrs. Mellor; and like moſt weak minds, inſtead of tracing his follies to the ſource of his own diſſipations and immoral conduct, he execrated the woman as the ſole cauſe of his misfortunes.

The following morning, after a conſultation with his pillow, and with his faithful adviſer the valet, he wrote a penitential letter to his father, throwing the whole blame on an artful woman, who had taken advantage of an hour of intoxication to complete his ruin, and whom he hoped, by a ſum of money, to get rid of for ever. As the whole of his letter was little elſe than a recapitulation of his perſonal excuſes, it is unneceſſary to inſert it.

On the baron it had no other effect than to excite contempt and hatred for a diſpoſition ſo mean and cowardly, whom he wiſhed to throw off for ever.

"This wretch," ſaid he to Lady P * * *, "is no longer worthy of our countenance. His whole conduct, from his childhood, has been ſcandalouſly depraved. The follies incident to youth, the

the too common extravagancies of young men, I could pardon, though *his* have been beyond all bounds. His diſſipations, his exceſſes of every kind, I have repeatedly forgiven. Had his vices been only ſuch as are generally termed juvenile indiſcretions, had he conducted himſelf like a gentleman, I might ſtill have borne with him: but now——"

"Aye, *now*," cried Lady P * * *, indignantly, "he has degraded himſelf and us, by a horrid, ſcandalous connexion, we can never own him; and has deprived us of a daughter-in-law who would have added riches and honour to our family. To be ſure this is really unpardonable: but what do you mean to do with him? You muſt allow him a maintenance, or, Lord bleſs me, he may diſgrace us yet more, to ſupport that horrid creature. Dear Lady Suſan! I hoped to have had the ſweeteſt companion in the world: but I never will acknowledge the wife of George as *my* daughter."

Whilſt ſhe was running on thus, the baron ſeemed loſt in thought. At length ſtarting

ſtarting up—" I will call on Lord B * *," ſaid he. " My brain is on fire, my mind diſtracted; for, however I determine, reproach and diſgrace muſt faſten its ſtings on my character."

He left the room. Lady P * * * wondered at his emotions, ſo very extravagant. To be ſure *ſhe* was horridly provoked and diſappointed, but the agitations of the baron were beyond her comprehenſion and feeling. A conſtant routine of faſhionable amuſements, and the little affection Mr. Tudor had ever ſhewn for his parents, had fortified her mind againſt that tenderneſs, thoſe exquiſite and undeſcribable ſenſations which mothers generally feel; and ſhe was, in conſequence, but little affected by his *follies*, otherwiſe than as they reflected degradation on his family, or interfered with her own gratifications.

The baron, mean time, paid his viſit to the earl, whom he found with the counteſsand Lord L * * *, and who had juſt been peruſing Elinor's anſwer to the letter we have before mentioned; on the receipt of

of which the latter was informed of the propoſal made to Elinor, and her rejection of it, and that in terms ſo oppoſite to the wiſhes of the counteſs, and, as ſhe thought, ſo proudly worded, as to give her ſome diſpleaſure.

The earl coincided with his lady in her ſentiments, obſerving, "that Elinor ought to have reflected, that it was *her* intereſt that was conſulted in the propoſal, not theirs; and however ſuch an inquiry might terminate, the conſequences could not be more *diſgraceful* to her than the myſtery that hung over her."

Lord L * * *, on the contrary, lover like, not only thought her juſtified in her refuſal, but admired her *proper pride*; a ſure criterion, with him, not only of the nobility of her mind, but that ſuch ſentiments could ſpring from no *mean origin*.

Thus even Lord L * * *, ſo amiable and liberal-minded in other reſpects, had a ſmall tincture of the "diſtinction of birth," and its power to inform the mind with true dignity and elevated ideas, without looking round the world, and permit-

ting his reaſon to convince him, that goodneſs of heart, a juſt and honourable way of thinking, conſcious worth and integrity, often dignify perſons in very inferior ſituations, and ſuch as have no claims to hereditary diſtinctions.

The family were thus in converſation, when the baron was announced. He was received with friendlineſs, but he ſaw a cloud on their countenances, which ſeemed unfavourable to his purpoſe of conſulting the earl, and indeed quite diſcouraged him, for the preſent, from opening his heart, as he had intended.

But knowing the conduct of Mr. Tudor could not be concealed, he related his diſappointment and diſpleaſure in warm terms, inveighing againſt his folly, meanneſs, and duplicity, and proteſting he never would forgive ſuch an imprudent, ſcandalous marriage.

His friends were much leſs ſurpriſed than concerned at this information. No improper conduct in Mr. Tudor could excite wonder, though they felt compaſſion for his father. It was, however, a point too

delicate

delicate for them to give any opinion as to the propriety of his reſentment: but Lord L * * *, generouſly, though perhaps not quite diſintereſtedly, pleaded for him, and urged the ſtrong ties of affection, of honour, and gratitude due to an unhappy female, loſt to the world by deſerved reproach, and ſinking under the conſequences of her weak imprudence, without one conſoling idea to ſoften the ſeverity of her fate.

"Surely," ſaid the baron, with ſome aſperity, "you do not juſtify the folly of ſuch men as marry women whoſe reputations are loſt, who have forfeited every claim to reſpect, and in whoſe conduct no man of ſenſe can confide?"

"No," replied Lord L * * *, "I do not *juſtify* or *approve* of ſuch connexions: but when ſuch a marriage has taken place, and poſſibly proceeded from motives of honour and compaſſion—from the reſult of ſuch feelings as are moſt honourable to his own heart, I muſt be allowed to think a man's inducements ſhould be fairly inveſ-

inveſtigated before he is entirely *reprobated.*"

"We think differently, my lord," returned the baron: "yet thus much I may confeſs, that had a ſon of mine diſgraced himſelf by an imprudent marriage with one inferior to him *in birth only*, I ſhould have deſpiſed his weak and grovelling ſoul, though I might not have been implacable, had the woman preſerved her character, and had *that folly* been his only one."

"And even that *only one*," ſaid the earl with warmth, "is ſuch a proof of meanneſs, of degeneracy, that it rarely deſerves to be pardoned; nor can the culprit *ever* be reinſtated in his former conſequence, either with his family or the world."

"Who, then, can blame *me*," returned the baron, "when that fault is aggravated by a connexion with an *infamous* woman—when his whole line of conduct has been marked with reproach, contempt, and abhorrence—when his baſe duplicity led him to make me an inſtrument to impoſe upon and inſult an amiable young woman, and a

family of diſtinction? No; I feel that I never can forgive him; and though the conſequence muſt cover me with confuſion and reproach, yet I no longer heſitate, no longer waver, but am determined to bear the puniſhment I have deſervedly incurred, ſo that I may throw off, for ever abandon, an ungrateful, unworthy boy."

No anſwer could be made to a ſpeech ſo determined. He ſat a few moments, loſt in thought, when the counteſs aſked him if he knew that Mr. Tudor had paid his addreſſes to Miſs Maſham, had offered her his hand, and had been rejected?

"How!" cried he, ſtarting up greatly agitated: "Addreſs Miſs Maſham! My God! what a miſerable wretch had I been if a ſecret marriage had taken place there! Gracious God! how ſevere would have been my puniſhment! But ſhe refuſed him—bleſſings, bleſſings on her!"

Both the earl and counteſs were aſtoniſhed and diſpleaſed at his vehemence.—"Surely," ſaid the latter, "Elinor is greatly ſuperior to the woman he married; and though it would have been a *degradation*

tion to his famliy, no *infamy* would have been attached to it."

"A degradation!" repeated he, warmly. "No—her hand would confer an honour on any man; the degradation would have come *from him*; he is unworthy of her, in every reſpect. What an eſcape! Good Heavens! I tremble that there ever exiſted a poſſibility of ſuch an union. How is the dear, lovely girl? When did you hear from her?"

The counteſs coldly informed him "ſhe was well, and at Edinburgh."

Some company were that moment announced, and the baron roſe to take leave. As the earl attended him to the antichamber, he caught his hand—"My friend, I much want your advice, and a ſecret conference. I will be with you tomorrow at ten; let me find you alone, and be denied to all intruders for a few hours. My heart is heavily oppreſſed; from you I muſt ſeek conſolation."

The earl replied he ſhould expect his viſit, and he might rely on his friendſhip. They parted; the earl returned to his company.

That

That evening Lord L * * * once more aſſumed reſolution to talk with his mother about Elinor. The counteſs very ſincerely loved her; and the warmth of her reſentment being a little abated ſince the receipt of her letter, ſhe frankly confeſſed there was no woman ſhe liked ſo well for a daughter.

"Ah, then!" ſaid he, "why do you not only *concur* with my father, but even ſtrengthen his objections? Why will you ſacrifice your ſon rather than your pride? And when reaſon pleads in favour of an excellent young woman, who alone can make me happy, why do you poorly deduce arguments that have no better foundation than the abſurd prejudices of birth, and the illiberality of the world, to overturn every poſſible hope, not only of my happineſs, but of my exiſtence? for I will not flatter you, madam, that I can *live* without her; and without your conſent ſhe never will be my wife. Thus my life is in your hands, to receive it, a ſecond time, from your affection, or to loſe it by your authority."

Deeply

Deeply touched, the counteſs embraced him in a flood of tears. "My dear Edward," ſaid ſhe, "your plea is irreſiſtible. Alas! can there be any heſitation between your life and the arbitrary, perhaps unjuſt, prejudices of the world, where merit weighs ſo little in the ſcale againſt birth and riches? I own that Elinor has virtues and graces to adorn any ſtation; riches we do not want; and the defects in her birth and family ought not to be a reproach to her, though the narrow-minded multitude may contemn her. Yes, my beloved ſon, you have *conquered* all my ſcruples, if not *removed* all my objections. I will exert all my powers to bend your father to your wiſhes, nor will I deſpair of ſucceſs. *Hope* every thing, but do not *abſolutely* depend upon my perſuaſions."

He kiſſed her hand as ſhe parted from him, overcome too much by her kindneſs to ſpeak the emotions of his heart.

The counteſs was as good as her word. She exerted all her eloquence, and diſplayed the ſelf-denial obedience of their worthy ſon in the ſtrongeſt light. It is unneceſſary

neceſſary to repeat all *her* arguments, or the ſtrong objections of the earl: but having once been induced to give up her own opinion, and to tremble for the life of a beloved child, ſhe was not eaſily repulſed.

She returned to the charge ſo often, and pleaded her cauſe ſo effectually, that he began to loſe ground, and at length conſented to talk with his ſon the following morning; and "if Edward perſiſted in his views of ſacrificing all ſuch claims as the world deemed indiſpenſable in a man of rank, to prevent him from marrying unworthily, why then he muſt be indulged. The conſequences would be his own ſeeking; and to his poſterity *he alone* would be anſwerable for their degradation."

The counteſs, now as eager to ſecond her ſon's wiſhes as ſhe had once been averſe, did not ſuffer him to paſs a night in painful ſuſpenſe. She gave him a brief relation of what converſation had enſued, and congratulated him on his proſpect of ſucceſs.

Early

Early in the morning Lord L * * * had an audience of his father, whoſe aſpect was not very favourable: but when the ſon pourtrayed the exceſs of his paſſion, and the earl beheld his pallid looks, recollected his late dangerous illneſs, and ſhuddered with apprehenſion that a relapſe ſtill more fatal might be the conſequence of a denial ſtrongly perſiſted in, he was induced to give a reluctant conſent, and promiſed that on their return to B * * Caſtle, in leſs than a month, he would himſelf introduce him to Elinor. One condition he inſiſted upon—that Lord L * * * ſhould conceal from every one, even from Elinor, his father's intentions in her favour, till communicated by the counteſs or him.

The tranſported lover readily ſubſcribed to the condition annexed to a conſent that was to make him the happieſt of men; and however difficult the taſk to conceal the tranſport of his heart from Elinor, he well knew his father would eſtimate his obedience in proportion to the trial; therefore whatever pangs it might coſt him, he reſolved

ſolved to perſevere in obſervance of his promiſe.

Scarcely had Lord L * * * quitted his father, in ſearch of his beloved mother, and to pour his acknowledgments into her ear, before the baron was announced. The traces of a ſerioufneſs nearly bordering on diſcontent were yet legible on the earl's features; the baron's countenance wore a ſimilar appearance. They ſaluted each other with more gravity than eaſe, and both ſeemed to labour with ſome oppreſſive ſecret.

We ſhall leave the baron to the diſcloſure of *his* buſineſs, as the reſult of their conference will be known hereafter, and take this opportunity to look back on our favourite Elinor, whom we left in a ſtate of dignified melancholy, without hope, and with no other conſolation than a conſciouſneſs of having acted agreeably to the dictates of duty and an upright heart.

Few are the misfortunes of life which ſelf-approbation cannot ſoften; ſeldom is the mind overpowered by adverſity, or the ſlights of the world, when cheered by

the conviction of ſuffering undeſervedly. How juſt was the reply of one of the ancient philoſophers to a man, who complained of "being calumniated!" and what added to his vexation was, "that the charges againſt him *were ſo unjuſt*."—"What, then," ſaid the wiſe man, "is your ſorrow the greater, becauſe you have not *deſerved reproach?* It is from *innocence* you muſt derive *conſolation*, and feel ſuperior to the malice of your enemies."

It was from this ſelf-approving conviction that Elinor acquired reſolution to ſtruggle againſt the tenderneſs of her heart; and by indulging that proper pride which is the offspring of a virtuous mind, ſhe endeavoured to ſoar above the obſcurity of her birth, and rather to *ſhrink from* than *deſire* a union, by which ſhe would be completely humbled, if conſidered as a perſon ſo highly obliged by being *admitted* into a family of rank.

It was now that the heroic and romantic ſentiments, that had formerly ſo much delighted her, returned in their full force. She was herſelf a heroine, extraordinarily circum-

circumſtanced. She indulged the fanciful idea, that ſhe was marked out to be unhappy, deſerted, and oppreſſed, and that it became her, under ſuch trying circumſtances, to conduct herſelf with ſuch dignity as might leave an example for admiration and imitation to all unfortunate females.

Madame Gaudry, who had, by her maternal tenderneſs, obtained the full and unreſerved confidence of Elinor, applauded and was delighted with the ſpirit ſhe ſo properly aſſumed; and it was at this very period ſhe received a moſt advantageous offer from Colonel Sinclair, a gentleman of faſhion and fortune, who addreſſed her, without a ſingle inquiry relative to her *birth* or fortune: ſo much had ſhe gained the general eſteem by the delicate propriety of her behaviour, and the high encomiums of Madame Gaudry.

This lady warmly ſeconded the colonel's wiſhes: but Elinor inſtantly, though politely, declined the offer in a manner ſo deciſive, as precluded hope or future ſolicitation—" her promiſe had been volun-

tarily made to live ſingle, and no temptation ſhould induce her to violate it." Her good friend could urge nothing againſt this plea; ſhe therefore ſought to amuſe her mind, and enliven the hours they paſſed together.

To her extreme concern ſhe was ſoon convinced that "affliction *does* ſubdue the cheek, though not the mind;" for Elinor grew thin, pale, and languid. She was cheerful and entertaining in company; ſhe was never indolent or unemployed for a moment; yet Madame ſaw the ſtruggle between the efforts of reaſon and the feelings of the heart affected the body, and undermined her health.

She was in this ſtate when ſhe was unexpectedly ſaluted by a letter from the baron. The contents aſtoniſhed her. He told her, "that he had never for one moment forgotten her; that ſhe held the chief place in his heart; and that though certain obligations had ſeemed to place barriers between her and his affections, he hoped ſoon to ſhake off the ties that had ſo long ſhackled him, and then he would freely

freely avow his love for her to the whole world, diſdainful of the conſequence to himſelf in the eyes of that world. He beſought her to remember ſhe had promiſed to conſult *him* in the diſpoſal of her hand, thanked her for refuſing Mr. Tudor, who was ſo unworthy of her, and flattered himſelf her good ſenſe would teach her to eſtimate a man's worth, not by his youth, but by his merit; and in that hope, and in full confidence of her promiſe being ſacred, a ſhort time would enable him boldly to claim her affections."

Surpriſe and indignation took full poſſeſſion of Elinor's mind. The inſult was unpardonable. A married man ſo ſhamefully to avow a guilty preference for another, and that other an unprotected female; or if ſhe *had* any claims to protection, it was from *his* friends, whom he groſsly affronted by ſuch improper freedoms. Every conſideration ought to have reſtrained and ſtifled, in their birth, ideas ſo unpardonably indulged and avowed.

Thoſe "ties" he intended to get rid of. How baſe, how ungenerous, to deſign a

mortal ſtroke to the peace of a wife, and hope to gratify his licentious wiſhes by an accumulation of crimes. The more Elinor reflected, the more deteſtable he grew in her eyes. "My heart repulſed him," ſaid ſhe, "on the very firſt interview; I felt an unaccountable repugnance to receive from him the ſlighteſt civilities. Ah! it was the irreſiſtible impulſe of virtue againſt a man abandoned to vice. I cannot, I ought not to retain any preſents from ſuch a man, who has forfeited all title to regard by a declaration of ſentiments ſo unworthy of himſelf and me."

After ſome conſideration, ſhe determined to incloſe his letter to the counteſs, in confidence, and requeſt her advice in what manner to return the watch and trinkets, which ſhe reſolved ſhould no longer remain in her poſſeſſion. Madame Gaudry, no leſs diſpleaſed than Elinor, very readily received them from her, ſealed up in a box, addreſſed to Baron P * * *, until an anſwer from the counteſs ſhould arrive.

This vexatious affront gave additional pain to Elinor's already oppreſſed heart; and

and to divert her thoughts from dwelling too much on diſagreeable ſubjects, ſhe accompanied Madame Gaudry in a tour through the principal towns and noblemen's ſeats in Scotland. On this pleaſurable journey we leave her, and return to London.

The earl and baron were ſhut up together for ſeveral hours. The confidence of the latter was full and explicit. The earl was not leſs ſhocked than ſurpriſed: but he readily coincided in the plans he had now adopted, and allowed that the baron acted upon principles that became a man of honour, under a conviction of error. Secrecy, for a ſhort time, was enjoined by the baron, and his friend ſaw the neceſſity of its obſervance.

This painful ſecret communicated, the baron felt a heavy load removed from his heart. He had brought the earl to ſecond his views, and his ſanction was a hoſt in his favour. He returned, and ſent for his ſon, who haſtened to him in a kind of doubtful hope that he ſhould meet a reproachful pardon and a ſtinted allowance.

His faithful attendant waited the reſult as the guide for *his* future conduct; and after three hours of impatience, his maſter returned wild and diſordered. He threw himſelf into a chair, ſpeechleſs. "What ails you, ſir?" aſked the valet.—"'Tis a curſed falſehood, a vile impoſition!" exclaimed the other, regardleſs of the queſtion. "I cannot, *will not* believe it. But by Heavens I will learn the truth, and that immediately!" He ſtarted up, and flew out of the houſe, leaving the aſtoniſhed ſervant overwhelmed with conſternation, curioſity, and conjecture.

During this period the baron had a long and humiliating conference with his lady. Certain late events, with the miſconduct of his ſon, and the ſenſible, ſpirited, yet friendly remonſtrances and advice he had ſubmitted to bear from the earl, had at length awakened in him a ſenſe of his own errors, vices, and follies, from whence might be traced the ſubſequent vexations and diſappointments he had experienced in his various purſuits and domeſtic plans.

When

When he had opened his mind, and decidedly pointed out to his worthleſs ſon his future expectations from his father, the ſum he had limited for his ſupport, and his fixed reſolution not to alter one circumſtance in his favour, the behaviour of Mr. Tudor was ſo indecent, ſo outrageous, though he was now ſenſible that to his own bad conduct he owed all his preſent and future diſtreſſes, that inſtead of mollifying, he increaſed the rage of his father, and was forbidden his preſence with equal anger and contempt.

The baron, in confeſſing all his errors, bore the torrent of Lady P * * *'s reproaches without repining at their ſeverity, ſecretly indulging the flattering hope, that *his* repentance, and the advice of their mutual friends, would operate to wean her from *her* follies, and reſtore domeſtic peace between them in future.

He had ſcarcely quitted his lady's apartment, when he was informed a lady waited in the library to ſee him. He entered the room. It was poor Ellen Glendower. "Am I to be quite diſtracted?" cried he.

"What means this bold intruſion? Leave me inſtantly; I will write, but I cannot talk with you."—"Yes," ſaid ſhe, weeping, "you *muſt*, you *ſhall* hear me *now*, perhaps for the laſt time. I have, three days ſince, buried my beloved father, after a ſhort illneſs of a week. Thank Heaven! he deſcended to the grave to the laſt moment ignorant that the daughter who cheriſhed him had betrayed and diſhonoured him. O, if ever impoſition can be forgiven, ſurely to conceal the infamy of a child from virtuous parents may be deemed a venial crime!"

"To what purpoſe," demanded the impatient baron, "is this preface?"—"To tell you," anſwered ſhe, "that the pious advice, the cheerful, religious hope, which animated the dying ſaint; the bleſſings—great God! how undeſerved!—which he beſtowed on his worthleſs daughter, under the deceived idea of her innocence, her integrity, and filial duty, all, all ſtruck daggers to my heart, and made me tremble before the divine Judge, whoſe bleſſings he invoked on my guilty head. What

ſcorpion can ſting ſo ſeverely as ſelf-condemnation! O, my Lord!" added ſhe, wringing her hands, "*you*, who deceived and betrayed my too credulous youth—*you*, who impoſed upon me oaths that have loaded me with ſhame and guilt—*you only* can reſtore my loſt peace, free me from the weight that drags me to the earth, and enable me, by deep repentance, to make my peace with Heaven!"

Her tears, her pathetic addreſs, pierced to the very ſoul of the agitated and now repentant baron, who knew that it was impoſſible for him to reſtore *her peace*, even by the grant of her wiſhes; many painful recollections muſt obtrude upon her mind, and ſhe had yet additional pangs to bear.

She ſaw the perturbation of his mind, and the conſcience-ſtricken remorſe that tied his tongue. "I am not, I hope, deceiving myſelf," ſaid ſhe, "when I think your feelings are in uniſon with mine; that honour, juſtice, and the peace of my ſoul demand from you an acquieſcence to my earneſt requeſt. I know and lament the

conſequence; but no advantages that can be held out can ſtifle the monitor within. Releaſe me from my oaths, or ſee me perjured before that Heaven I have ſo deeply offended."

"Be compoſed, Ellen," ſaid he. "I do, before that Heaven, free you from all oaths and obligations which I impoſed upon you. I wiſhed to have a conference with you, but not in this houſe. Return to Putney; you will probably meet an unexpected gueſt: but at all events you ſhall ſee me to-morrow. Return, return, I beſeech you. My mind is in tumults; ſevere are the conflicts I endure: but henceforth I will live to repent, and atone, all in my power, for the injuries I have committed."

Something ſatisfied by the releaſe which ſhe had obtained, yet alarmed at the import of his words, ſhe aroſe—"I ſhall expect, you, my lord; nor can I taſte of peace till this conference you mention is over. Alas! peace, did I ſay? *that* can *never* reach the ſelf-reproaching mind."

The

The afflicted and repentant Mrs. Glendower left the baron to the painful recognition of events that turned him recoiling from himself; and he gladly flew to buſineſs, though in itſelf diſagreeable and mortifying, as a reſource againſt obtruding reflection.

We ſhall not follow the baron in his viſit to Mrs. Glendower, or trace him through the neceſſary humiliating ſteps which contrition, juſtice, and family dignity called upon him to purſue, but look in upon the Earl of B * *'s family, where the counteſs had juſt received Elinor's letter, with the incloſure from the baron.

That lady felt equally hurt and indignant with her young friend, and directly communicated it to her lord, with comments not very favourable to the baron's character. The indifference ſhe obſerved in the earl's countenance, whilſt he peruſed it, increaſed her diſpleaſure and ſeverity of remark. "How," ſaid ſhe, "can you think lightly of ſuch an inſult as this?"—"I do not *think lightly* of this letter, I aſſure you," replied he. "Elinor very properly

properly reſents it, and your indignation is very natural; yet I pity the baron."

"Pity him!" ſhe exclaimed. "Pity a man who abandons himſelf to his paſſions, and dares to confeſs his unwarrantable views to a virtuous young woman! I deſpiſe and deteſt him; nor ſhall I conceal my ſentiments from him, though I would not wound the heart of Lady P * * * with ſuch intelligence."

The earl ſmiled—"My love, your own upright heart makes you a very indifferent judge of the ſentiments and feelings that monopolize the heart of a fine lady. I dare ſay the baron's inclination for another woman would be a matter of perfect indifference to her. However, I approve of your attack on the baron; ſhew him both letters, and let him bluſh before you for his errors and improper conduct."

The counteſs was but half pleaſed with this permiſſion; the earl was not warm in the cauſe of Elinor; and now that they ſecretly conſidered her as one of the family, ſhe thought ſo groſs an affront ought to have excited more indignation. Ah! thought

thought ſhe, even Lord B * * is not perfect. Theſe men conſider as trifling and venial ſuch crimes as ought to cover them with confuſion, and merit the deteſtation of every virtuous mind.

She did not wait long for an opportunity to teſtify *her* reſentment, for the baron, after his conference with Mrs. Glendower, came to ſeek the earl; and not finding him at home, he could not avoid paying his compliments to the counteſs for a few minutes.

He was thunderſtruck and confuſed at the ſeverity of her looks. Ah! Lord B * *, thought he, you have betrayed me, before matters are ripe for an extenuation. He made a ſlight compliment, and pretending buſineſs, would have withdrawn directly.

"My lord," ſaid ſhe, "I beg leave to treſpaſs on you for a few moments, and requeſt you to be ſeated."

He obeyed, evidently chagrined and impatient.

She then produced her two letters; and whilſt he ran over Elinor's, ſhe read him a lecture

lecture in ſuch ſevere and pointed terms, that conſcience ſuffuſed his cheeks with crimſon, and he really felt more confounded than ever he had been in his life before. When ſhe pauſed, expecting his reply, he returned the letters.

"Your charming friend, madam, is perfectly juſt and correct in her indignation, nor is your diſpleaſure leſs proper or leſs deſerved; yet I cannot retract what I have written."

"How!" exclaimed the counteſs. "Is it poſſible, that knowing the enormity of your offence, and the abhorrence it muſt incur, you can preſume to avow your ſentiments to *me?* For ſhame, my lord. Have ſome reſpect for decorum, if you are loſt to virtue."

"I find, madam," ſaid he, after a little pauſe, reſpectfully taking her hand, which ſhe coldly withdrew, "I find that I have not fortitude to brave your diſpleaſure, nor reſolution ſufficient to let you continue in an error that muſt entirely deprive me of your eſteem. The earl has been juſt to the confidence I repoſed in him; nor, I confeſs,

confeſs, would *you* have been included in that confidence but for the receipt of theſe letters, apparently ſo very injurious to me."

"I am not, indeed, in your ſecrets," anſwered ſhe, gravely, "but I ſhall be glad to hear what can be ſaid in extenuation of your *apparent* inſult to an amiable young woman."

"'Tis a long ſtory, madam, and I well know the conſequence of relating it muſt cover me with confuſion, as it does with remorſe. To clear myſelf of this imputed crime, I muſt acknowledge others little leſs reprehenſible: but the event, though not the exact circumſtances, will ſoon be public, and I will bear the deſerved ſhame of repeating particulars to you, and hope to diſarm your reſentment by an avowed penitence, and a reſolution to make all poſſible atonement for errors that have brought their puniſhment home to my heart."

This preface greatly intereſted the counteſs; and having given orders to be denied to all company, except her lord and Lady P * * *, ſhe diſpoſed herſelf to liſten with

with attention to a narrative that promiſed much information, from the agitated manner of the narrator. The baron then entered on his "juvenile indiſcretions," his ſeduction of Ellen Glendower, bringing her to town, and continued correſpondence with her after his marriage with Miſs Meredith.

All this our readers being already acquainted with, we ſhall take up the ſtory in his own words, at the period where we broke off, when he was extremely anxious for a ſon, and when an event happened that ſeemed likely to gratify his wiſhes.

"I confeſs to you, madam," purſued the baron, "that the want of a ſon made my increaſing indifference to Lady P * * * amount nearly to hatred. Ellen alſo had brought me two daughters, who, like my others, by my wife, died in their infancy. I thought my fate very ſevere to have only girls, and the diſappointment affected both my temper and ſpirits, when ſuddenly both my wife and Ellen announced themſelves pregnant. Once more my hopes revived, and my mad deſire for a ſon induced me to

adopt

adopt very extraordinary meaſures. I had cauſe to believe that Ellen would firſt become a mother. I perſuaded her to engage the ſame woman who was midwife to Lady P * * *. This woman, by handſome preſents, and a ſmall annuity for life, engaged herſelf, by ſolemn oaths, to further my purpoſe, and keep my ſecret inviolable. This ſecret was, that if Ellen had a ſon, and Lady P * * * ſhould again have a daughter, the midwife was to ſubſtitute one in the other's place.

" I muſt do Ellen Glendower the juſtice to ſay, that ſhe remonſtrated warmly againſt the injuſtice of depriving an innocent child of its natural rights; for however I had ſucceeded in my deſigns upon her perſon, her heart preſerved a degree of integrity that made her always unhappy and at war with herſelf for continuing a correſpondence with me after my marriage came to be known.

" I had much difficulty in making her ſubſervient to my wiſhes: but at length I conquered, and engaged her, by oaths

equally

equally ſolemn with the midwife's, to aid in my ſcheme. But the reluctance ſhe expreſſed obliged me to extend my plan and my confidence, not chooſing to truſt either of the women more than I could avoid.

"My tutor, with whom I had ever preſerved a conſtant intimacy, and whoſe goodneſs of heart and integrity induced him to perſevere in his friendly endeavours to wean me from my errors, as much from a very ſincere affection, as from principles of religion and honour; this worthy man, whom poſſibly moſt people would have thought the laſt man in the world likely to have been drawn into a ſcheme of duplicity—this truly good man I pitched upon to be an active aſſiſtant in the deception I meditated, if it became neceſſary.

"Mr. Maſham lived but a few miles from town—"

The counteſs ſtarted—"Good God! Mr. Maſham did you ſay?"—"Yes, madam," replied the baron. "I took ſuch meaſures to obtain his concurrence, that by artful management I drew him in to engage a ſolemn vow of ſecrecy, to the extent

extent of *my* life and *his* own, never, without *my permiſſion*, to reveal the ſecret I was about to communicate.

" Worthy, unſuſpicious man! what endleſs regret and ſorrow I entailed upon him for all his attentions to an unworthy pupil! I aſſure you his ſhare in the buſineſs always occaſioned me remorſe, and a thouſand fruitleſs wiſhes that I could have emancipated him from his vow: but I had gone too far, had ſacrificed too much, to give up the firſt hope of my life.

" In ſhort, madam, I was determined to have an heir. Ellen was delivered of a ſon five days only before my wife was brought to bed of a daughter. What I ſuffered the laſt month, between hope and fear, and the hazard whether they would come nearly together or not, cannot be expreſſed. The man that purſues crooked paths, and plans a ſyſtem of deception, though every wiſh and deſire appears to be gratified, is an unhappy wretch, who lays up a ſtore of miſery for himſelf, tortured by apprehenſions of diſcovery; and too generally finds, in the accompliſhment of unwarrantable

ſchemes,

ſchemes, puniſhments a thouſand times more ſevere than he could have experienced in the bittereſt diſappointment of his hopes.

"Not to tire you with a relation of unintereſting facts, by the concurrence and ſkill of the midwife and myſelf, the exchange of the children was made unknown to any one. The woman, when Ellen was delivered, gave it out to be a girl, at all hazards; and when ſhe was obliged to give up her attendance to wait on my wife, that ſame night of her delivery the children were removed by me, after every one in the houſe were in bed, that could obſtruct our views.

"Poor Ellen very reluctantly parted with her boy, and was ſtill more ſhocked on beholding the wronged little girl. However there was no remedy; ſhe had ſworn to preſerve the ſecret. Her boy was undoubtedly my ſon, and would be heir to immenſe property, which the girl was cut off from by the entail.

"When Ellen had ſuckled the child a month, I took it from her, much againſt her

her inclination, and delivered it to my friend Maſham, to be brought up as his own."

"Good Heaven!" cried the counteſs: "What then, is our beloved Elinor your daughter?"

"She is," replied the baron; "and no doubt from inſtinct aroſe that tenderneſs which took poſſeſſion of my heart the very firſt moment that I ſaw her; though I own, with ſhame, I imputed it merely to her beauty, and conſidered her only as a deſirable object for a vicious paſſion, if ſhe could be obtained.

"But to return. The earl informed me, a few days ſince, that from ſome memorandums of Mr. Maſham you are acquainted that I gave him a ſmall living, better indeed than his former one, to which himſelf, his wife, and his little charge ſoon after removed.

"It was after the late counteſs of B * * left Mr. Maſham's houſe that he became my preceptor, and from that hour always my friend; though I too often abuſed his kindneſs,

kindneſs, and deſerved and met with his reprehenſion for innumerable follies.

" Lady P * * *, ignorant of the deception, was pleaſed that a boy was granted to my wiſhes, and in his infancy he was the darling of both: but we were both too fond of the world to give up the pleaſures of it, and too indifferent to each other to find happineſs in domeſtic life. My views gratified, I became more careleſs towards her, and ſhe had no more children.

" As for Ellen Glendower, when her month was up, and the girl taken from her, no perſuaſions, threats, or endearments could induce her to continue any further connexion with me.

" She had heard of her mother's death; ſhe had been enabled, by my bounty and her own economy, to place her ſiſters in reputable ſituations, except the youngeſt. I had made her a ſettlement, which her parents were taught to believe was the legacy of a rich old lady ſhe had lived with; ſhe therefore ſent for her father and young ſiſter, took a ſmall houſe near town, and has

has lived ever ſince with reputation; as ſhe did near five years with me, irreproachably as to any errors but thoſe I occaſioned.

"That ſon ſo deſired, ſo impoſed on the world as heir to his mother's fortune, from his juvenile years has been a ſource of conſtant ſorrow and anxiety. His exceſſes, his follies, his extravagancies have been without bounds, and of the loweſt kind. Truly depraved, in every ſenſe of the word, I have a thouſand times curſed the hour in which I made an exchange that has been productive of ſo much evil.

"His real mother has ſuffered the bittereſt diſtreſs from the atrocity of his conduct. Lady P * * * has been vexed and mortified: but her heart was never attached to him, and her pride only was wounded by his ſhameleſs irregularities.

"My own conduct, I acknowledge, gave me but little right to reprove him; only that *his vices* were degrading and vulgar, whilſt mine at leaſt had the ſanction

of the world as the vices of a gentleman. He deſcended to actions and companions beneath a common mechanic.

" I ſent him abroad with a man of ſenſe, and at his return hoped a reform in his conduct. Small were my hopes, and ſtill leſs were they realized. Mean time I made Mr. Maſham a trifling allowance for my daughter. He had what he choſe to accept—not much, I confeſs. I gave the child a few trinkets proper for her age, and on his removal to Scotland, forced on him a valuable ring.

" He took it with reluctance. 'I receive it only in truſt for Ellen,' ſaid he. I had deſired him to give her that name; and ſoon after he quitted England on his wife's death, Ellen not five years old, and I never ſaw him again.

" Our correſpondence was not frequent. He importuned me to free him from a vow that oppreſſed his heart, to provide for Ellen, and make her independent. I would conſent to neither. I offered a ſum of money, to bind her to ſome perſon in buſineſs, to get her own living. That offer

offer he refuſed with contempt. At length he wrote to me that an elderly lady had taken Ellen as a companion, that ſhe would be provided for, and of courſe he ſhould no longer draw on me, or expect any remittances, ſince ſhe was now placed at a diſtance, and independent of us both.

"I was pleaſed, vexed, and mortified at the wording of this letter. I wrote to know where and with whom ſhe was placed? He refuſed to gratify me—'I had reſigned all rights in her; *he* had done the ſame. It was ſufficient to know ſhe was in good hands, and had a competency, if not an abundance: enough to make her happy; more was not needful.'

"It was in vain I ſolicited him to be more explicit. He decidedly aſſured me that 'ſhe was decently provided for; that he would anſwer no further inquiries, unleſs I was inclined to *do her juſtice*. She would be my acknowledged *daughter*, or nothing to *me*. The mean propoſition I had made had *alienated* all *my* rights; and I might reſt in peace, that unleſs *conſcience* or *accident* diſcovered my ſecret, his dear

Ellen would know no other father than himſelf, till death required from him an acknowledgment that ſhe was not *his child*—all the information *my cruel* precaution and *his weak* credulity had left him the power to give, independent of my conſent.'

"Far from being offended, I really rejoiced to be freed from an incumbrance that was a conſtant thorn in my boſom. Since ſhe was well ſettled, I was unnatural enough to reſign her to her fate without a ſigh of remorſe.

"To ſay the truth, I ſuſpected that ſhe was married, and that he only eluded my curioſity by talking of her ſettlement with an old lady. I confeſs there were times, when the very bad conduct of my ſon, his low propenſities, and unbounded expences, would give me many pangs for my unjuſt proceedings; and I certainly was ſeverely puniſhed for the wrongs I had done to poor Ellen.

"Lady P * * *, never diſplayed much fondneſs for him in his infancy; and as he advanced in age, his untoward and inſolent manners

manners to her were not likely to conciliate her affections. The love I really felt for him he took all imaginable pains to weaken in early youth; and his ſubſequent conduct gave me equal ſorrow and indignation. In ſhort, his character grew too notorious not to deſerve univerſal cenſure and contempt; and bitterly did he retort upon me my injuſtice to his wronged ſiſter.

"Within this laſt twelvemonth I have ſeveral times been provoked to take ſhame to myſelf, and caſt off an unworthy boy; nay even his own mother urged me to diſcloſe the ſecret of his birth to him, as a check upon his vices and inſolent behaviour: but I could not ſummon reſolution to confeſs the duplicity I had been guilty of, and incur the contemptuous reflection of the world, though every principle of honour, juſtice, and inclination prompted the meaſure.

"Whilſt I was thus tortured in my mind, my correſpondence with Maſham had been totally ſtopped. It was reſumed on the earl's buſineſs. I made a ſlight inquiry after Ellen: he as coldly anſwered,

'that he had reaſon to believe ſhe was very happy in her ſituation, having heard nothing to the contrary.' This ſort of vague reply confirmed me in the idea of her being married; and from pride and caprice, though I would have placed her in a low ſituation myſelf, my mind revolted againſt the daughter of Baron P * * * being *married* beneath the dignity of her birth.

"You ſee, madam, I do not conceal from you the abſurdities and inconſiſtencies of my ſentiments. Such will ever be the caſe with a man who has departed from the line of rectitude to gratify reprehenſible paſſions; a thouſand contradictory feelings are always afloat to agitate and torment him.

"At length I heard of poor Maſham's death, proceeding from an inquiry at his long ſilence. My heart ſmote me ſeverely. It was the moſt painful ſtroke I had ever known. His health, his peace, had been ſacrificed to his integrity and my injuſtice. I dared not to inquire after his adopted child, leſt I ſhould hear additional cauſe of diſquietude; and after the earl had

taken

taken poſſeſſion of B * * Caſtle, a ſtrong inducement with me to viſit him was the hope of accidentally learning ſome news of Ellen.

"Never ſhall I forget my emotions on the firſt view of that lovely, much-injured girl; yet ſo ſtrongly had the idea of her marriage taken poſſeſſion of my mind, and ſo much older did I ſuppoſe my daughter muſt appear, that moſt unaccountably I blinded myſelf; and even the name of Maſham, though it confounded and puzzled me, could not impreſs me with a notion that ſhe was my child. It was a ſtrange infatuation and ſelf-deluſion; and do not hate me, madam, when I confeſs, that I placed the ties, the impulſes of natural affection to another account, and wiſhed myſelf the maſter of Elinor's perſon.

"One morning I held a ſhort converſation with her in the garden: her behaviour ſurpriſed me; and from thence I was led to queſtion the earl very particularly concerning her. His information at once opened my eyes, and removed the veil ſelf-deluſion

had thrown over my mind. I was convinced that the lovely Elinor was my much-wronged Ellen, as I called her, though it ſeems Maſham had baptized her Elinor.

"It is impoſſible to deſcribe the conflicts I endured to preſerve my ſecret, yet indulge my affection. I doated on, I gloried in the child I had ſo cruelly reprobated, but ſtill I could not relinquiſh the mercenary, darling views of having all my wife's eſtates added to my family name. Abſurd and unjuſtifiable pride and avarice! for I had more than enough in my own right.

"I earneſtly wiſhed to get her to town, to have her highly accompliſhed, though I had not decided what were my plans. I did not mean to acknowledge her, unleſs Ellen Glendower could be brought to own her as *her* child, and my *natural* daughter; a circumſtance that ſhe wiſhed for, when I cruelly took the infant away, the more effectually to ſcreen it from her knowledge or my wife's.

"Her ſteady refuſal to leave you, and my ſudden call to town, diſconcerted all my meaſures,

meaſures, and I left her with the greateſt reluctance.

"On my return, I heard freſh vexatious accounts of my ſon, and again I balanced whether I ſhould not throw him off: but pride and a falſe ſhame ſtill held me back; and an opportunity that offered of uniting him to a very amiable lady of rank and fortune again flattered my vanity, and confirmed my wavering reſolutions in his favour.

"I had written to conſult Mrs. Glendower on my other favourite project, that ſhe ſhould be the mother of Elinor. This letter brought her in perſon to town; though by the deed of ſettlement we were to meet no more—nor did I wiſh to ſee her. She not only peremptorily refuſed my requeſt, but declared herſelf miſerable in the deception ſhe was privy to, in wronging Elinor, to aggrandize her own child, whoſe vices ſhe conſidered as a puniſhment on her for her crime; as poſſibly had he been more humbly educated, more ſuitably to his juſt expectations, he

might have been a comfort to her, inſtead of a continued ſource of ſorrow and regret.

" All arguments and intreaties were fruitleſs. She beſought me to do my daughter juſtice, whatever might be the event to her ſon. I had made a ſettlement on him of ſix hundred a year; ſhe conſidered it as quite ſufficient to gratify every reaſonable purpoſe of life. I could not determine. I told her I would conſider of it; and having been a little back in my payments of her annuity, for which ſhe ſcorned to aſk me, I paid her the full amount, and beſought her to re-conſider and grant my requeſt.

" She received the money with tears. 'It is the price of my innocence (ſaid ſhe,) and ſtrikes me with ſhame and remorſe: but I will not be guilty of more deceptions. I am ready to acknowledge my paſt crimes, to receive my ſon, and do juſtice to your daughter, but never will I ſuffer Lady Elinor P * * * to be degraded by a ſuppoſed connexion with a worthleſs

mother. She ſhall not bluſh for a parent, nor believe herſelf the offspring of guilt.'

"With this fixed reſolution ſhe left me. I admired her integrity, though I was provoked at her obſtinacy. I ſaw it would be impoſſible to make her ſubſervient to my purpoſe, and that I muſt adopt other meaſures for getting Elinor to town.

"At this time that curſed affair of Mellor's wife came out; the conſequence was, that George fled, was purſued, at length traced to the woman's houſe; a duel enſued, in which he had nearly loſt his life; and I had heavy damages to pay if I ſtill ſupported his claim upon me. I was ſo anxious to complete my wiſhes of his union with Lady Suſan, that I fooliſhly paid the money, and prepared for the marriage.

"How all my long-projected views of vanity and ambition have been blaſted by his marriage with an artful woman, you well know; and this event has cauſed a total revolution in my mind.

"To the earl I related, though not ſo circumſtantially, the ſtory I have repeated to you, and by his ſenſible and friendly

advice I was confirmed in my reſolution to ſtand the brunt of all the reproaches and contempt I deſerve for the baſe duplicity I have practiſed, and the unpardonable injury done to my worthy child.

"The letter I wrote to her was at the time I had determined to acknowledge her as my *natural* daughter, and excuſe myſelf for not having done it ſooner, from particular obligations I had entered into for my concealment; which obligations were now done away. I wrote purpoſely in a myſterious ſtyle, to amuſe her curioſity, not foreſeeing the inference ſhe would draw, or the reſentment ſhe would feel at it. However, on re-peruſing the letter, I find ſhe was juſtified in both; and I love her the more for that proper and virtuous indignation.

"Thus, madam," concluded the baron, "I have related to you, without reſerve, my unjuſtifiable error, and can only hope the indulgence of your future friendſhip from the affection you bear to my excellent child, and the very ſincere contrition I feel for my paſt conduct."

The

The counteſs, who had liſtened to this long detail with mingled ſenſations of horror, contempt, pity, and joy, was for ſome moments ſilent, to recover from the various emotions that oppreſſed her. At length holding out her hand, as a token of peace—"To add reproaches to a wounded conſcience and a ſelf-convicted mind," ſaid ſhe, "would be a wanton and undeſerved cruelty. You, my lord, muſt long have ſuffered under both; for not all the deluſive pleaſures you have purſued could ſilence the inward monitor that will obtrude on the guilty heart."

"You are right, madam," ſaid he. "I plunged into a thouſand diſſipations to ſtifle reflection, but remorſe often found its way to my boſom, and ſecret vexation poiſoned every entertainment I ſought to partake of. Guilt and hypocriſy may delude the eyes of the world, but the moſt hardened offender cannot eſcape that all-ſearching eye that penetrates to the heart."

He then proceeded to tell her, that he had developed the ſecret to his unworthy ſon,

ſon, and had ordered him to attend his real mother, after having had a previous converſation with her on the ſubject.

He had, by good luck, the teſtimony of the midwife, who was alive, though in a declining ſtate, to corroborate the confeſſion of Mrs. Glendower, who voluntarily revealed her own errors to do juſtice to Elinor; and *he* ſhould readily bear the ſhame of his own acknowledgment, as the perſon who ſuggeſted, and forced others into the completion of a baſe duplicity.

He came to acquaint the earl, that all parties were to meet that evening at his counſellor's chambers in the Temple, and to requeſt his lordſhip would be preſent at the general confeſſion.

He had previouſly, he ſaid, made over five thouſand pounds to Mrs. Glendower, entirely at her own diſpoſal, which, added to four hundred a year already ſecured to her, would perhaps enſure the reſpect and attention of her ſon.

The ſix hundred a year ſettled on him he ſhould ſtill enjoy; and if his future conduct merited his favour, he might do more for him.

The

The counteſs aſked if Lady P * * * had been made acquainted with all theſe particulars. He ſaid ſhe had; that at firſt ſhe was outrageous at the impoſition on her: but that after the firſt ſally of her rage was over, ſhe comforted herſelf that ſhe ſhould have a daughter, who might form an alliance ſtill more noble than her quondam ſon ſo imprudently forfeited. "You will pardon me for obſerving," added the baron, "that the ſtrange apathy of her diſpoſition precludes her from feeling any great emotions of joy for the reſtoration of a child torn from her in its very birth. Abſorbed only in ſelfiſh gratifications, ſhe regards every event only as productive of pain or pleaſure to herſelf. Her pride reſented the impoſition more than her heart, and the ſame paſſion will induce her to pardon it, and receive her daughter with pleaſure, in the hope of deriving future gratifications to her predominant and governing principle."

The counteſs ſhook her head, without making any reply, and the baron took leave.

When

When left alone, she retraced all the events related by the baron, and both her heart and judgment severely condemned him. Elinor, her dear Elinor, would now be called into notice, and grace the dignity of her birth. This first emotion of joy was checked by a second, which gave her little less pain; "Would not the noble Elinor remember that her alliance had been objected to; that family pride had overbalanced affection, and the many claims her personal merits entitled her to? Would this amiable, rejected, slighted young woman look with a favourable eye on any address *now*—now when it would appear as the flattering homage of a selfish family to her rank and fortune, not to her personal and mental charms?"

She now deeply regretted the injunction of secrecy imposed upon Lord L * * *, since, but for that, his address and their consent would have reached her previous to the knowledge of her birth, and consequently have entitled them to her grateful affection.

"Ah!"

"Ah!" ſaid ſhe, "how forcibly does this remind me of Mr. Maſham's letter, to 'beware of raſh promiſes, and carefully to guard againſt the impoſitions of ſecrecy, which generally implies ſomething wrong, and is almoſt always repented of.' I feel the truth of his obſervation in its full force, and the whole life of the baron has exemplified it."

Whilſt ſhe was loſt in thought, the earl returned, to whom ſhe named her viſitor and his communications, with her added reflections on the ſituation of her ſon and Elinor.

Lord L * * * being then abſent on a viſit to a friend at St. Alban's, the earl propoſed an entire confidence in the baron, and to let their future proceedings be guided by the manner in which he ſhould receive the information. To this ſhe acceded; and that very evening, when Lord B * * returned from the Temple, he told her, not only that Elinor's birth and legitimacy were eſtabliſhed beyond a doubt, but that the baron heard with inexpreſſible joy of Lord L * * *'s attachment,

ment, and had propoſed that they ſhould grant him permiſſion to ſet off immediately for Scotland, to try his ſucceſs with Elinor, without either being let into the diſcovery of her birth.

The counteſs was pleaſed with the ſcheme. She wrote to her ſon, that he had their free conſent to go on to Scotland, and obtain Elinor; that they ſhould be at B * * Caſtle themſelves in leſs than a fortnight after him, and had reſolved, if Elinor accepted him, to have their marriage celebrated within a month, if poſſible.

This moſt welcome and entirely unexpected letter gave Lord L * * * inexpreſſible delight. He apologized to his friends, that very urgent buſineſs called him to the north; and in a few hours after the receipt of the tranſporting permiſſion ſo earneſtly deſired, but ſo little hoped for, he was on the road to Scotland.

Whilſt he is on his journey, we have time to take a look at Mr. Tudor, or, as he was now called, Mr. Glendower, who, it may be recollected, left his wondering

dering valet in no very pleaſant ſtate of mind, when he flew out of the houſe towards Putney.

No language can pourtray the diſtracting ideas, the hopes, fears, and anxious ſuſpenſe that overwhelmed this wretched young man, when he ſtopped at the houſe of Mrs. Glendower, whom he had not ſeen for ſome years, though *he* was not ſo great a ſtranger to her. As ſhe expected this viſit, ſhe was not unprepared for it, though very much agitated when his name was announced; and his appearance, ſo wild and diſordered, ſhocked her not a little.

"Tell me, madam," ſaid he, "advancing with a quick pace, "what am I to call the lady I ſee before me?"

"My name," ſaid ſhe, faintly, "you muſt remember is Glendower, and I am your——"

Mother ſhe would have ſaid: the name died on her tongue.

"What!" cried he, impatiently; "ſay what!"—"*Your mother*," ſaid ſhe, rouſed by the inſolence of his manner. "Yes, *I*

am

am your mother, to *my* misfortune and yours."

He ſunk back in his chair. "Is it true? Am I then completely undone? O, that curſed woman! My egregious folly! But tell me all; ſay that I am an undone wretch, and that all my proſpects are ruined. Yet why ſhould I credit ſuch a deteſtable tale? It is all a falſehood, a combination to wrong me, and caſt me off. I will not believe it. I will appeal to the world; I am his acknowledged ſon in the face of mankind, and I will have juſtice done me."

He had got up from his chair; ſhe laid hold of his coat—"Stop, George," ſaid ſhe; "I *command* your ſtay. I take Heaven and its holy ſaints to witneſs that I am your mother, and was moſt reluctantly drawn in to countenance the deception, to impoſe you on Lady P * * * as *her* child. The baron *is your father*: but alas! to my ſhame, I confeſs you are illegitimate. I never was married, and your name is Glendower."—"Curſe the name!" cried he, paſſionately. "Would I never had a being!

being! Do you believe I will face the world as *your* ſon, after being the acknowledged heir of Baron P * * *? Can he, can you, in any ſhape counterbalance the ignominy and diſgrace you have brought upon me?"

"The diſgrace," returned ſhe, "is your own ſeeking. Your character was baſe and ignominious before your degradation from the rank you ſo unjuſtly held. Had you deſerved your father's affections, or the approbation of the world, you would ſtill, againſt my wiſhes, have been Mr. Tudor: but your conduct diſgraced the name, and merited the reprobation you have met with."

He again poured forth a volley of execrations. She waited till the paſſion was a little expended, and then calmly proceeded to tell him the eſtabliſhment deſigned for herſelf and him. "You can no longer ſpend thouſands idly, on the preſumption of being heir to an immenſe fortune," ſaid ſhe; "but you have ſtill a handſome proviſion. The ſhame that follows your change of fortune is attendant on your father;

father; no liberal mind will attach it to you; and you have it greatly in your power to acquire more reſpect as Mr. Glendower, by altering your conduct, and living reſpectably within the limits of your income, than ever you obtained by a rank or ſuppoſed birthright, which your actions diſgraced. For *myſelf*," ſaid ſhe, "relieved from the painful weight of ſupporting an impoſition, it is not my intention to return into Wales; neither do I purpoſe to remain here, but to go into the weſt of England, and, by the regularity of my behaviour, and a ſincere repentance of my errors, to entitle myſelf to *my own eſteem*. The reſpect of the world, or of the little world that I ſhall know, will ſoon follow."

"And what is to become of me, and the woman I married? Confuſion and curſes attend the wretch who has been the cauſe of my ruin!"

"If, my ſon," ſaid ſhe, "you will accompany me, I have no doubt but you may ſoon forget all preſent evils, by a new regulation and new connections. If, on the

the contrary, you prefer any particular plan of life, point it out to your father, with ſubmiſſion to his will, and he will doubtleſs accede to your wiſhes."

"Let him, then, procure me a place abroad, for in England I cannot live."

"Well," returned ſhe, "I will write to him; meantime you muſt think of providing for your wife—for ſuch ſhe is, whatever are her faults or vices."

He anſwered, *that* muſt be a future conſideration; for the preſent he ſhould return to London.

Convinced by a chain of circumſtances, and evidence he could no longer doubt, of his being the ſon of Mrs. Glendower, he conceived an invincible averſion to both his mother and father; and far from feeling that to his own vices and follies he owed the diſcovery that humbled him ſo greatly; far from regretting the wrongs done to the innocent Elinor, he beheld himſelf as the moſt wronged and moſt ill-treated of mankind; imprecated his parents, Elinor, and, above all, his now deteſted

teſted wife, whom he determined to ſee no more.

The valet, who had gone out and returned ſeveral times in the courſe of the day, and began to be very apprehenſive of ſomething fatal, was rejoiced, at the cloſe of the evening, to ſee his maſter return; and that maſter, accuſtomed to make his ſervant his confidant, (the common weakneſs of little minds,) no ſooner threw himſelf into a chair, than he entered upon his ſtory, and related "his curſed ill treatment" in his own mode, which threw all the odium off his own ſhoulders, and placed it on the neck of his parents, whom he abuſed without mercy: but chiefly the *ci-devant* Mrs. Mellor, his now hated wife. Her he execrated in the moſt horrid language, ſince from her originated all his misfortunes, the diſcovery of his marriage, and the deception deſigned on Lady Suſan Delamere, which had ſo juſtly irritated his father; the conſequence of which was, that inſtead of being preſumptive heir to five-and-twenty thouſand a year,

year, he was now turned on the world, covered with ſhame and diſgrace, with only ſix hundred a year, and the chance of poor five thouſand pounds.

Nothing could exceed the ſurpriſe of the ſervant. But he had his full ſhare of cunning. The real income of Mr. Glendower was as much as it had been; and he well knew that *he* had the chief regulation of his diſburſements and expences; it was as well, therefore, to make ſome merit of an attachment till a better opportunity. This he did ſo effectually, that Mr. Glendower was charmed with the fidelity and kindneſs of his ſervant, and began to think his fate not ſo deplorable as he firſt conceived it to be.

When the turbulence of paſſion and the rage of diſappointment began to ſubſide, when Mr. Glendower found that he was abſolutely dependent on the baron's bounty, without any legal claims, that cunning and meanneſs which is the concomitant of a little and ſelfiſh diſpoſition, taught him the neceſſity of conciliating

the baron's favour, by the appearance of an entire ſubmiſſion to his will.

Had this young man been poſſeſſed of any one good quality, either of honour or principle, he would have deſerved compaſſion, as a victim to the duplicity of others: but his misfortunes having their ſource from his own depravity of heart, we can feel as little pity for *his* degradation, as for the conſequent humiliation of his father, whoſe preſent act of juſtice to an injured child proceeded from the total loſs of all his ambitious views, in the behaviour of an unprincipled ſon, not from compunction of heart, or a conviction of the wrongs he was guilty of.

It was the complete overthrow of his moſt ſanguine hopes, the deſtruction of the fabric he had been ſo long raiſing to gratify pride and avarice, that obliged him to turn his eyes on the poor abandoned Elinor, and diſcard a ſon, whoſe life and actions held forth only ſhame and diſgrace to all his connexions.

The

The conference he held with the earl *firſt* produced *ſorrow* and *remorſe*. That nobleman did not ſpare him in the portrait he drew, the juſt point of view in which he placed all the deceptive, unjuſt ſchemes that he had purſued, and which terminated in the ruin of his ſon, and a certain portion of ſhame and reproach upon himſelf for the remainder of his life, which he juſtly incurred.

When he reflected on the baſeneſs of his conduct to all parties, ſo entirely unwarrantable, and without a ſhadow of excuſe but from the diſgraceful motives of ambition and avarice, he then began to feel himſelf contemptible, and to bluſh before the worthy earl, whoſe nobleneſs of ſoul, and ſuperiority of virtue, made his meanly proud ſpirit ſhrink from a man whoſe rank and fortune were no way ſuperior to his own. Such is the power of virtue to awe the ſelf-condemned culprit, when inſolence can no longer ſupport guilt.

Mr. Glendower purſued his adopted ſyſtem of ſubmiſſion and ſupplication. His father knew well, from the feelings of his

own heart, how to appreciate both; for each of them bowed under the evils they had carved for themſelves. The baron, however, was conſcious that thoſe evils originated from himſelf; he therefore grew mollified and leſs ſevere to the errors of his ſon; and as an opportunity then occurred to procure him a good place in Ireland, his intereſt with the king obtained the appointment for *Mr. Glendower*, without his majeſty being acquainted that he was the *ci-devant* Mr. Tudor, or as yet knowing the change in the baron's family; the buſineſs not being quite ready for publication.

No ſooner was this appointment ſettled than Glendower left England, his mother, and his wife, whom he now deteſted; and feeling the neceſſity of acquiring ſome reputation, he reſolved to begin a thorough reform in his conduct. How he ſucceeded will be ſeen in the concluſion of this hiſtory.

Lord L * * *, though he travelled with the utmoſt expedition that poor cattle and bad roads would admit, had his patience

patience pretty well exhauſted by the time he arrived at Edinburgh; and then, when at the end of his journey, and the beginning of his hopes, his ſpirits were ſo extremely agitated, that he was compelled to go to bed for ſome hours, to compoſe himſelf previous to his interview with Elinor.

He certainly ought to have ſent his name, and aſked permiſſion to wait on her: but I am ſorry to ſay Lord L * * * *had his foibles.* Perfection is not to be expected in man. He had the vanity, or perhaps it was the modeſty, of a doubtful paſſion, for we are willing to excuſe him, if poſſible. Whatever was the motive that ſuggeſted the experiment, he was deſirous of witneſſing the effects of ſurpriſe in the miſtreſs of his heart, by appearing before her unexpectedly.

He repaired to Madame Gaudry's, and ſent a meſſage that a gentleman waited to ſpeak with Miſs Maſham, at the requeſt of Lady B * *. Elinor, unſuſpicious, though a little hurried, (for her very delicate health was ill prepared for ſurpriſes,

or viſits from ſtrangers,) haſtened down with trembling ſteps, and the door being opened, ſhe advanced but a few paces before ſhe ſaw Lord L * * * ſtep quickly towards her. A faint ſhriek and a tottering frame made him catch her in his arms and place her in a chair, apologizing for his abrupt intruſion, and ſecretly execrating his own folly, or preſumption, whichever it was, that had ſo terrified the poor Elinor.

She did not faint, though ſhe was ſome time ſpeechleſs, and her whole frame trembled like a tender plant ſhaken by a ſtorm. During her attempts to recover from her fright, whilſt he was eagerly making his excuſes, his eye took in the delicate, much-altered perſon of his beloved Elinor. Inexpreſſibly ſhocked, he exclaimed, "My God! you have been ill, and I have been ſuch a thoughtleſs brute as to diſorder your weak frame. Ah! my deareſt Miſs Maſham, how could you cruelly conceal your illneſs from your friends, from my mother, who adores you? For Heaven's ſake ſpeak, ſay, tell

tell me, are you *very* ill? Will you forgive my abruptneſs? Indeed, indeed I am miſerable to ſee you thus."

He kiſſed her paſſive hand in an agony that gave her both pain and pleaſure. She endeavoured to ſmile—"I am *not very ill*," ſaid ſhe. "My health has been indifferent, but I am lately returned from a tour that has greatly amuſed me. My ſpirits are weak, and the unexpected pleaſure of ſeeing you for a few moments overpowered them. How is my dear counteſs—the earl? and how comes it that I ſee *you* here?"

The eyes, the voice of Elinor were ſo replete with tenderneſs, that though ſhe ſeemed to affect a diſtance in her manner, the lover's heart vibrated to the tones of her ſoft voice; and he had penetration enough to diſcern that he was far from being an unwelcome gueſt.

"My deareſt Elinor," returned Lord L * * *, "I come here not only by *permiſſion* of my parents, but even at the requeſt of my mother. I come to pay my devoirs to you—to dedicate my future life

to make you happy, if you will condeſcend to accept my ſervices, and permit me to hope that I may ſoon preſent to your admiring friends the daughter of *their* heart, and the deareſt object of mine—the wife of my choice. On your acceptance of my hand depend their happineſs and mine."

Confuſion, doubt, joy, and anxiety agitated Elinor beyond the power of words to deſcribe. She ſat motionleſs, her eyes fixed on the ground.

"Will you not ſpeak to me, my dear Miſs Maſham? Ah! do not thus torture me with ſuſpence. I have but juſt begun to live, and cannot ſupport diſappointment now."

She lifted up her tearful eyes—"Would not the counteſs *write to me?*" aſked ſhe, in a tremulous voice.

"What!" cried he, "can *you* doubt my honour, my veracity? But ſee, there *is my mother's letter*. Will that credential entitle me to your attention, too cautious Elinor?"

She

She ran over the letter, and the ſuppreſſed tears now burſt from her eyes as ſhe heard his laſt words, in a tender but reproachful tone.

"Forgive me," ſaid ſhe; "my queſtion implied not a doubt of your honour. I am very weak; as little capable of ſupporting joy as ſorrow: but I ſhall ſoon be better."

She had recourſe to her ſmelling bottle, whilſt he, preſſing the diſengaged hand to his boſom, cried, "And do you, my lovely Elinor, forgive me for my abrupt intruſion? But love is ſuperior to form. I wiſhed to meet you unprepared to expect me; and will you allow me to interpret your emotions in my favour?"

"Can you doubt it?" anſwered ſhe. "Ah! my lord, when my tongue pronounced my reſolution never to be the wife of another man, it was becauſe my heart had made its ſelection beyond the power of time or accidents to change."

This tender reply threw my lord into raptures, which were only checked by ob-

ſerving that ſhe ſeemed oppreſſed, and was really more weak than ſhe was willing to acknowledge. She ſent for Madame Gaudry, introduced my lord, and with her accuſtomed frankneſs told her he was there by the *permiſſion* of his father. He felt hurt at the repetition of that word. "I came here, madam," ſaid he, "to rob you of your ſweet friend, if the earneſt ſolicitations of *my* friends, who reverence her virtues, and the moſt tender and reſpectful adoration—"

"Pray, my lord," ſaid the bluſhing Elinor, interrupting him, "ſpare me this undeſerved homage, which mortifies me, from a conſciouſneſs of my own littleneſs. Talk to me rather of your dear parents. O, how I long to embrace my dear counteſs!"—"Not more ardently *than I do*," cried he, with vivacity. "My heart will ſpring to meet them."

"Indeed!" ſaid Madame Gaudry, ſmiling. "I did not ſuppoſe you had a heart in your poſſeſſion."

"Ah!"

"Ah!" returned he, in the ſame tone, "forgive my blunders; I am intoxicated with joy: but my meaning wants no explanation."

Madame, who ſaw the perturbation of Elinor's ſpirits, and knew her delicate ſtate of health, thought it requiſite to change the ſubject, by talking of their late pleaſurable tour; and ſome time after the young ladies, who were a part of their agreeable ſociety, were introduced: but Lord L * * * had neither eyes nor ears for any but his adored Elinor. He was aſtoniſhed at her improvements, and intoxicated with delight that he was now at liberty to expreſs the emotions of his heart, without violating any duty.

When he retired for the night, Madame Gaudry warmly congratulated her young friend on her pleaſing and little-expected proſpects of future happineſs.

"I confeſs to you, my dear madam," ſaid ſhe, with all the frankneſs natural to her character, "that I feel the higheſt pleaſure in this agreeable turn in my affairs. I pretend not to the ſmalleſt reluc-

tance in uniting myſelf to Lord L * * *: but pure and unmixed joy is not the lot of mortals; and as my more than father, my revered Mr. Maſham, often told me, almoſt every pleaſure has its concomitant pain."

"Thoſe obſervations are doubtleſs very juſt," replied Madame Gaudry; "but I ſee not how they are applicable to your particular ſituation juſt now, or from whence you can extract any painful circumſtance to militate againſt your preſent agreeable proſpects. It is ungrateful to Providence for the bleſſings beſtowed upon us if we refine away our happineſs by a deſpondent ſearch after the *poſſibilities* that may interrupt it."

"Ah!" ſaid Elinor, "do you reckon as nothing, then, the mortifying circumſtances attendant on my birth? Can I enter with confidence into that family, who muſt ſacrifice ſo much in the world's opinion to prove the ſtrength of their affection for a deſerted orphan? Am I not humbled in the reflection that I can confer neither honour, riches, nor conſequence

quence on the man I love, but that every favour, every obligation, muſt proceed from him and his family, and that in exalting me he degrades himſelf?"

"Not one of theſe ideas ought to obtrude on your mind," anſwered Madame Gaudry. "It has been proved that rank, riches, and the reſpect of the world were all inſufficient to procure happineſs to Lord L * * *, or peace to his parents, ſo tenderly attached to a deſerving ſon. *You*, then, are the favoured object who have the delightful pleaſure of making *him* happy, of reſtoring to health and peace that ſon, on whoſe doubtful life hung the balance of their future miſery or happineſs; it is you who are the cauſe from whence they muſt derive their felicity, and to *you* they are indebted for every brightening proſpect of domeſtic joy—the only pure and unmixed pleaſure this ſublunary world allows of."

"O, my dear madam!" cried Elinor, embracing her, "how ſweetly do you comfort me, and enable me to look forward, without too high a ſenſe of the obligations

gations that preſs upon my heart! Pure indeed will be my joy and exultation, if I have the power to communicate to my deareſt, my honoured friends, and their beloved, generous ſon, any ſhare of that tranſport I ſhall feel in being their acknowledged daughter, the daughter of their choice. To have *a father, a mother,*" added ſhe, burſting into tears, "O, how delicious the idea! How does my heart vibrate at names ſo dear!"

Madame Gaudry permitted her tears to flow unchecked. She ſaw her feelings were wrought up to that pitch, as to make the tender effuſion highly requiſite towards calming her ſpirits; and Elinor was herſelf ſenſible of the relief they afforded to her.

When ſhe retired to her pillow ſhe reviewed the occurrences of the day; retraced every word in the letter from the counteſs to her ſon; yet ſhe thought that lady *might* have written *alſo to her*; and this failure in delicate attention ſhe permitted to be a drawback on the pleaſure of ſeeing him.

She

She began alſo to conſider, that for Lord L * * * to remain at Edinburgh a conſtant attendant on her would ſubject both to many remarks; many conjectures would be formed, and perhaps malicious concluſions drawn. Beſides that curioſity might be at work to learn more of her than might be for the honour of her friends; ſhe might be traced by that reſtleſs and malignant ſpirit to be "nobody knows who," and conſequent reflections be thrown on the generous family who adopted her into their own. On every account, then, ſhe thought it would be moſt prudent for him to go to B * * Caſtle, and there wait the arrival of his parents.

This opinion ſhe enforced next day ſo ſtrongly, and ſo firmly reſiſted both his arguments and entreaties, that all he could obtain was a ſort of compromiſe. Three days hence were fixed upon for his departure, and the utmoſt limits ſhe could be prevailed upon to allow him.

The day previous to his intended journey, both her pride and delicacy were gratified

gratified by receiving a moſt affectionate letter from the counteſs, who congratulated *herſelf*, "that no longer a ſhadow of an objection exiſted to her embracing, as the wife of her beloved ſon, that amiable girl who had long held the next place in her heart. She hoped that Lord L * * * would prove a ſucceſsful wooer; and the moment his letter arrived, to announce that moſt agreeable and much-deſired information, they ſhould leave England, and haſten to embrace her."

This affectionate letter ſilenced every obtruding thought that intervened between her and happineſs. No faſtidious doubts hung at her heart, and with her native candour ſhe freely gave way to her feelings, and acknowledged to Lord L * * *, that his affection, and the approbation of his parents, had crowned every wiſh of her heart.

Time, ſo unfriendly to lovers, occaſionally too ſwift, and oftentimes ſo ſlow as to mock their impatient ſpirits, advanced now, in Lord L * * *'s opinion, with rapid ſtrides, to drive him from happineſs and

and Elinor. The probationary three days were expired, and his lady miſtreſs demanded his abſence in a manner too deciſive to admit of expoſtulation. In ſhort, he tore himſelf from her with the extremeſt reluctance, and not without reproaching her too ſcrupulous delicacy, though his judgment approved what the heart condemned.

Elinor ſhared in the pain of ſeparation: but a ſacrifice approved by reaſon ſhe had not only learnt to ſubmit to, but to triumph in. It had been the only conſolation attached to her, when ſhe concluded, ſome time back, that ſhe had given up Lord L * * * for ever; and this ſelf-denial, this obedience to the calls of duty and gratitude, ſhe now thought were more than rewarded by the happy change in her ſituation.

"The roſes will bloom, when there's peace in the breaſt."

A very ſhort time reſtored the bloom ſo faded in the cheeks of Elinor; Peace, and its companion Cheerfulneſs, reſumed their former

former ſtation in her boſom, and daily letters from Lord L * * * were a ſure ſpecific for health, appetite, and reſt.

She had avoided mentioning the inſult ſhe had received from Baron P * * *, though he had informed her of the ill conduct of Mr. Tudor, and the conſequent diſpleaſure of his father. She could not feel ſorrow for either; ſhe thought both deſervedly puniſhed in the diſappointment of unwarrantable views. She was indeed ſurpriſed the counteſs was ſilent on the ſubject of the letter, but ſhe had no doubt but that ſhe would reſent the baron's conduct.

Lord L * * * had been gone from Edinburgh ſomething more than a fortnight, and Elinor's heart daily palpitated in the expectation of hearing from or ſeeing the counteſs.

She was one evening ſitting alone with Madame Gaudry, having peremptorily refuſed to accompany her companions to a private ball, when the noiſe of a carriage ſtopping at the door alarmed every nerve. She roſe from her ſeat; a ſervant appeared:

but

but before ſhe could announce the name of the viſitor, the counteſs ruſhed forward, and caught the trembling Elinor in her arms. Having embraced her warmly, ſhe reſigned her to her ſon, who ſtood at her elbow envying his mother the affectionate careſſes of his "peerleſs fair one."

"Here, Edward," ſaid the counteſs, "here is your beſt and lovely phyſician, to whom I am indebted for the health and happineſs of my ſon."

The happy Edward kiſſed the hand of his miſtreſs, murmuring ſome inarticulate words which died on his tongue; whilſt the no leſs happy Elinor had that fullneſs of joy, that perfect content, no words could expreſs; nor had ſhe powers to ſpeak any part of what ſhe felt.

The meeting between Madame Gaudry and the counteſs was extremely affectionate. Many years had intervened ſince they had ſeen each other, and the latter had been a ſtranger to the misfortunes of her juvenile companion, until informed of them by Lady P * * *. *Her* ladyſhip, however, had no predilection for old acquaintance who

who moved in a ſphere ſo different from her own; and it was merely by chance, on a retroſpection of their early days and amuſements, that ſhe mentioned a letter ſhe had received long ago from Madame Gaudry, with a brief recital of her troubles, and requeſting the intereſt of Lady P * * * to recommend her in the line of her buſineſs.

The counteſs, whoſe heart was tremblingly alive to the afflictions and misfortunes that oppreſſed the worthy and induſtrious, the widow and fatherleſs, ſecretly determined to take the firſt opportunity to ſerve her old friend, and was delighted to place Elinor in ſuch worthy hands.

Whilſt the lovers, who had recovered from their temporary dumbneſs, were entertaining each other, the counteſs had obtained from Madame Gaudry a full knowledge of her ſituation; who, gratefully thanking her kind friend for her unreſerved offer of ſervice, told her "that ſhe had now nothing to wiſh for in this life more than ſhe enjoyed; her income was genteel,

genteel, and more than ſhe expended, conſequently ſhe laid by every year, to guard againſt neceſſity in her old age, if ſhe lived to be infirm."

"Without a hope," ſaid ſhe, with a tearful eye, "of any future pleaſures in this life, I bow before that Supreme Power who has, by his all-directing hand, deprived me of all earthly hopes and affections, and drawn me, I truſt, through humble ſubmiſſion, and patient endurance, nearer to himſelf. In diſſolving the ties that chained me to the earth, he has taught me to direct my thoughts and wiſhes above all ſublunary things."

The counteſs ſympathized in her afflictions and in her better hopes; at the ſame time earneſtly requeſted that ſhe would ſpend ſome time at B * * Caſtle when Elinor was married.

"Such powerful inducements as your ſociety, and your charming daughter elect," ſaid Madame Gaudry, "will in all probability be greater than I ſhall have reſolution to reſiſt. I congratulate you moſt heartily, dear madam, on the proſpect of

Lord

Lord L * * *'s happineſs. Since the death of my Maria I have never had my affections ſo irreſiſtibly engaged as by Miſs Maſham. I ſhall feel the loſs of her ſociety moſt painfully; indeed more ſo than I conceived it poſſible, ſome time back, I could be affected again in this world: but I hope I ſhall be capable of feeling equal pleaſure in her happineſs; I have outlived all ſelfiſh conſiderations."

The young people now advanced—joy beaming in the eyes of Lord L * * *, a ſoft and pleaſing ſenſibility in thoſe of Elinor. Madame Gaudry was informed they ſhould leave her the following day. We ſhall paſs over the ſcene of ſeparation. They parted with mutual regret, and not until Madame had engaged to paſs a month with them ſoon after Elinor ſhould become Lady L * * *.

On the road Elinor was informed the earl and counteſs had only arrived one day at the caſtle before ſhe yielded to the impatience of her ſon, and the impulſe of her own heart, to recover her beloved Elinor.

When

When Elinor croſſed the moat and drawbridge, a pleaſing recollection ſtole over her mind. She lifted her eyes, and met Lord L * * *'s fixed on hers.

"Ah! my dear Elinor!" exclaimed he, "our ſouls are in uniſon. The firſt time you croſſed this bridge imprinted your image on my heart."

"Indeed!" cried the counteſs, laughing. "A firſt-ſight love, it ſeems! A greater compliment to your eyes than to your judgment, Edward."

"Pardon me, madam," returned he; "I ſaw with the eye of reaſon. A ſecret intuition taught me to read the heart in the expreſſive countenance; and the muſic of the voice aſſured me at once that all was harmony within."

"I proteſt, my dear Elinor," ſaid the counteſs, gaily, "that I could almoſt ſuſpect you had initiated him into your once favourite ſtudies, and taught him the language of romance. It muſt be confeſſed you have either inſpired him above vulgar mortals, or that the little blind god has a peculiar

peculiar facility in inſtruction, when he has taken poſſeſſion of the heart."

"Dear madam," replied ſhe, bluſhing, "*you* muſt recollect there are circum ſtances and certain ſituations when the heart does not always wait to take a leſſon from prudence: but, if reaſon afterwards, takes the lead to correct or confirm firſt impreſſions, we may pardon the haſty judgment of the eye. The error is but a venial one, when diſcretion aſſerts her empire to govern the paſſions."

"All this from you, Elinor!" cried the counteſs. "Why I am aſtoniſhed! You have learnt to chop logic very prettily, and alſo delicately to remind your reprover that ſhe was once young and ſuſceptible herſelf. I ſee that I muſt drop the argument, and allow, that when good ſenſe and diſcretion are permitted to 'correct or confirm' (your own words) the ſuſceptibility of the heart, we have little to fear from the eye miſleading the judgment. But there have been many deplorable inſtances of miſery in domeſtic

life, ariſing from the faſcination of the ſenſes, and the deluſion of the eye. Thank Heaven, my dear Edward received a firſt impreſſion in favour of the moſt deſerving of her ſex; and as it was the firſt, I pray Heaven it may be the laſt and only one his heart may ever acknowledge."

As no particular occurrences or a ſingle accident had impeded their journey, they alighted at the caſtle even before the earl had expected them. He embraced Elinor with the utmoſt tenderneſs, and welcomed her return with a warmth that greatly delighted her. Paſſing through the inner hall to the cedar parlour, ſhe met the grateful and affectionate old Malcolm, who had come that morning to pay his duty to the earl, and by him was informed that he ſoon expected Elinor, who was to be the wife of Lord L * * *.

The good old man ſhed tears of joy, and fortunately had not left the caſtle when the party arrived. He advanced with ſpread hands, and large drops rolling down his cheeks—"Heaven be praiſed, my dear young lady, that I have lived to

ſee you return with honour. Thank God! thank God! you will be our noble lord's daughter, and a lady yourſelf. My old heart dances with joy that you be rewarded for all your goodneſs, and the proudeſt in the land may be yet prouder in calling you daughter."

Elinor was ſurpriſed and affected by the preſence and addreſs of the old man. She preſſed his folded hands between hers—"I rejoice to ſee you, my good friend. How is Mrs. Malcolm and your daughter?"—"Why old Martha is laid up in the rheumatiſe, and is always a-fret i ng about that knave Sandy. As for Bridget, her decks herſelf out, and walks about; and ſo that ſhe hath her finery and good living, her careth for little elſe; though her doth attend to her poor mother a little; and our gracious lord here hath ſtopped the nuity from being paid; ſo the rogue wont get all he wanted, nor ſhall we be ſuch a charge to you, my dear generous lady."

Elinor was much pleaſed with the old man's information, and aſſured him ſhe would call the next day and ſee Mrs. Malcolm.

Malcolm. Happy in herſelf, ſhe no longer remembered the ſlights ſhe had received from the ſelfiſh vulgarity of others; ſhe only thought of the attentions ſhewn her in her younger days, which demanded from her a grateful return.

It was with ſome difficulty the earl and counteſs could bear the reſpectful gratitude of their young friend, or ſuppreſs the ſecret riſing to their lips, ſo very intereſting, and ſo little expected: but the baron and his lady were hourly looked for, and the former had requeſted their ſilence on a ſubject of ſo much importance, that he wiſhed to witneſs the emotions of Elinor, on the firſt diſcovery.

In the evening, when Elinor attended the counteſs to her apartment, ſhe ſaid, "Were you not much ſhocked, madam, at the confidence and depravity that could dictate ſuch a letter as I incloſed to you from the baron?"

"I certainly was, my love," anſwered the counteſs. "I felt equal ſurpriſe and indignation, and I did not let him eſcape without *expreſſing* my reſentment. Perhaps

you may ſoon hear the particulars of our conference on the ſubject; at preſent I wiſh to think only of our proſpects of happineſs, and to avoid recurring to paſt diſagreeables, which I hope are all done away."

Elinor dropped the ſubject, though ſhe thought it rather ſingular that the counteſs choſe not to be more explicit.

The following morning, accompanied by Lord L * * *, who had, with earneſt intreaty, obtained permiſſion to accompany her, ſhe paid her promiſed viſit to Mrs. Malcolm. She was received by Bridget, dreſſed in ſuch a ſtyle, that even *her* features evinced evident marks of riſibility. Lord L * * * burſt into a violent fit of laughter.

She had on a black ſilk petticoat trimmed with ſcarlet fringe, a yellow ſilk gown, the two front breadths pinned behind, the cuffs and robings worked with green and gold, a fine necklace of large green beads, and a head-dreſs with a toupee at the top near a quarter of a yard high, and pinners flying in the air.

All

All this finery had been made for her lady, in her courtly days: but the old counteſs was very much awry, and not tall, at leaſt not near the height of Bridget, therefore the clothes were very ſhort: but as ſhe could not lengthen *them*, ingenuity had contrived to make an addition to a fine ſcarlet broad-cloth *under*-petticoat, which had gold lace at the bottom, and this being let down to her feet, was conſiderably below the black ſilk; and by this contrivance the trimming of gold lace had its due effect of attracting the eye, ſo that not even her yellow cloth ſhoes paſſed unnoticed.

Old Malcolm had remonſtrated on this ſuperabundant finery, but the fine lady told him "it was all her own, that ſhe had toiled for it night and day, and truly ſhe *would* wear it, for it became her as well as other folks, who, by their trigues, had coaxed away all the beſt, and every morſel of the laces, which ought to have been hers. Now as they had got the nuity again, and wasn't beholding to *ſhe* any more, Miſs Elinor ſhould ſee ſhe

knowed how to dreſs as well as other folks."

It was with extreme difficulty that old Malcolm held his tongue on the ſubject of Elinor's intended marriage: but the earl had bid him not mention it till he received permiſſion from herſelf.

The moment Lord L * * * and Elinor came in ſight he met them, and deſired the latter not to be angry becauſe that ſilly, obſtinate puſs would be dreſſed out, but he believed it was to ſhew her reſpect. The appearance of the lady prevented any reply, and had ſuch an effect on both, that neither could ſpeak.

Bridget, who ſaw her father bowing to his "lordſhip," was at firſt thunderſtruck, on beholding Elinor leaning on the arm of *a lord:* but *ſhe,* recovering from the involuntary mirth the ſtrange figure before them had excited, addreſſed her with much kindneſs, and inquired after the health of her mother.

Pulling her embroidered cuffs over her elbows, with a deep courteſy directed to my lord, and her head half turned, ſhe replied,

plied, "Dear gracious! Miſs Elinor, I be glad to ſee you. Why I thought as how you was never a-coming to theſe parts any more. Well, ſee how things turn and turn about, as I may ſay."

"Why don't you anſwer Miſs Elinor?" cried the old man. "What ſignifies what you thought?"

Lord L * * * could no longer ſtand this ſcene; he turned away and walked off with Malcolm. Bridget then found her tongue, complained of her mother's illneſs and croſſneſs, her own trouble and turmoils to tend her, and concluded with thanking God "that naſty rogue Sandy had cheated himſelf as well as them; only 'twas hard to loſe the ſilver things, 'cauſe afore that ſhe could hold her head as high as the miniſter's wife."

Diſguſted equally by her abſurd vanity as want of humanity, Elinor turned from her, and entered the houſe, directing her ſteps to the room where Mrs. Malcolm lay a helpleſs cripple. By dint of inquiry ſhe learnt that Bridget had ſhamefully neglected her, though it was with reluctance

the poor woman ſpoke to her diſadvantage. As the worthleſs daughter had followed her into the room, ſhe made no ſcruple of reading her a lecture that put the ſcarlet under-petticoat out of countenance; for vexation and ſmothered rage mounted the blood to her cheeks, while her palſied lips trembled with the agitations malice and envy raiſed in her heart: but the figure of Elinor, leaning on my lord's arm, roſe to her remembrance, and ſtifled her paſſion.

Truly compaſſionating Mrs. Malcolm, Elinor promiſed to ſend her a good nurſe, ſince her unnatural daughter failed in her duty to attend her, and aſſured her that every comfort in her power to beſtow ſhould conſtantly be adminiſtered to her and her huſband.

She left the poor woman bleſſing her goodneſs, and accuſing herſelf for having before now miſbehaved, which, ſhe ſaid, and ſaid truly, "was all along of Bridget, who perſuaded her to be frumpiſh to ſuch a good young lady, who deſerved all ſhe had, if 'twas twenty times more."

Elinor

Elinor returned to Lord L * * *, who was impatiently expecting her, and, followed by the heart-felt bleſſings and prayers of old Malcolm, they walked back to the caſtle, diverting themſelves highly with the dreſs of Bridget,

She went to her apartment to dreſs for dinner, and had juſt finiſhed her employment, when the counteſs came to her, ſaying—"A courier has juſt been here to inform us we may expect Baron and Lady P * * * in a few hours."

"How, madam!" cried Elinor, in an accent and with an air of aſtoniſhment.

"Yes," continued ſhe, careleſsly, "and we hope they will paſs ſome weeks, if not months, with us. You will oblige me, my dear Elinor, by adding a few ornaments to your dreſs."

Putting on the table a diamond ſolitaire, and a ſet of buckles for her breaſt, ſhe withdrew, without waiting for a reply.

Nothing could have more aſtoniſhed our heroine than this information. That the baron ſhould be invited at this particular period, and his continuance there wiſhed

for, was the moſt unaccountable ſtep, conſidering the inſult offered to her, that ever perſons, intereſted for her honour, could have adopted.

That Lady P * * * ſhould accompany him was alſo extraordinary: but after many reflections and conjectures, ſhe concluded that the unworthy nobleman had been ſo ſeverely ſchooled by the counteſs as to occaſion at leaſt a temporary repentance, if not a laſting one, and a wiſh to do away the remembrance of his improper conduct by the propriety of his future behaviour. Yet ſhe was far from being pleaſed. She felt an invincible repugnance to aſſociate with a man whom her heart rejected as unworthy, and libertine in his principles; and in proportion as ſhe diſliked him, her pity and eſteem roſe for Lady P * * *, whoſe gay character had never reached the ears of Elinor, and whom ſhe felt inclined to reſpect as the friend of her dear counteſs.

That lady's requeſt for her to be ornamented ſhe ſuppoſed aroſe from the kind wiſh of having her appear to advantage in the

the eyes of her friend, to juſtify, in ſome meaſure, the choice of Lord L * * *.

"Without any claims to reſpect from fortune, birth, or connexions," ſaid ſhe, ſighing, "I muſt at leaſt endeavour, by exterior attractions, to give his taſte ſome credit for the predilection he has ſo generouſly ſhewn to a nameleſs orphan."

The thought humbled her: but her anxiety for the reputation of Lord L * * * carried her through the taſk of dreſſing again with more alacrity and attention than ſhe had ever felt on ſuch an occaſion.

When ſhe ſeated herſelf at the dinner table, every eye viewed her with delight. Lord L * * *'s ſeemed to devour her.

"Confeſs, my love," ſaid the earl to his lady, "that for once in your life you have been miſtaken: our ſweet Elinor certainly acquires additional beauty from the elegance of her dreſs."

"I cannot deny it," ſaid ſhe, "though I did not think it poſſible; and I am mortified in the conviction, that unadorned charms are not ſo near perfection but that

nature may yet receive embelliſhments from art."

Lord L * * * was about to ſpeak, when Elinor, abaſhed by their compliments, interrupted, or rather prevented him, by aſking the counteſs if Madame Gaudry had not been uncommonly handſome.

"No," ſhe replied, "never handſome, but perfectly agreeable, with good ſenſe and good humour more than ſufficient to atone for the want of perſonal attractions, had ſhe been a plain woman, which ſhe was not."

Speaking further of the heavy loſs ſhe had ſuſtained in her daughter, ſhe mentioned her fondneſs for poetry, and was juſt taking her pocket-book from her pocket to produce ſome verſes, when the ſound of carriages cauſed a general agitation, and ſhe returned the book into its place.

Elinor, hurried as ſhe was, obſerved her friends directed their eyes towards her with an affectionate anxiety, and heard the counteſs ſay, "I fear it will be too much for

for her."—"No," anſwered the earl, in the ſame low tone; "joy, though ſometimes oppreſſive for the moment, quickly finds relief."

He had time for no more: the doors were thrown open, and the baron and his lady announced.

Elinor's trembling knees ſcarcely ſupported her, and ſhe was ſurpriſed at her own emotions. The baron barely returned the ſalute of the earl before his eyes fell on Elinor. He flew to her, and caught her in his arms.

"Elinor, my dear injured Elinor! forgive me—forgive—"

Your father, he was going to add: but ſtruggling violently, ſhe exclaimed, "Unhand me, ſir! What means this freedom?"

In the ſame moment Lady P * * * broke from the arms of the counteſs, and flying to the ſtruggling, indignant girl, ſhe cried, "My child—my daughter—my dear, dear child!" and claſped her in her in her arms.

"*Your* child—*your* daughter!" ſaid ſhe, wildly ſhrinking from her embrace.

"Yes, my Elinor, yes, *you are my child*; I am your mother. O, I feel it at my heart! A ſenſation equally new and delicious."

A ſudden ſhriek followed this expreſſion, tottering under the weight of Elinor, who was lifeleſs in her arms. Lord L * * *, not leſs amazed, had his eye upon them, and, aſſiſted by the baron, placed Lady P * * * in a chair, whilſt Elinor, laid on a couch, was inſtantly ſurrounded by her friends, and very ſoon reſtored to life, to the extreme joy of her lover, who was almoſt frantic.

The moment ſhe appeared to be recovering, the baron advanced, and on his knee kiſſing the paſſive hand of his daughter—"Much-wronged Elinor!" ſaid he, "forgive your repentant father. My child, I have inverted the order of nature: the parent ſupplicates forgiveneſs, and bluſhes before the object from whom he might have claimed reverence, had he not violated—"

"O, ſtop,

"O, ſtop, ſtop," cried Elinor. "If I am indeed your child, do not humble me thus by undue ſubmiſſion. But can it be? Have I a mother?" ſaid ſhe, ſtarting up, and in the ſame moment found herſelf in the arms of Lady P * * *, who had recovered, and ruſhed towards her.

"You have—you have a mother," exclaimed ſhe. "My dear, my lovely Elinor, never did I feel happineſs till this moment."

The ſweet girl returned the warm preſſure of affection, whilſt a guſh of tears—tears that ſpring from undeſcribable tranſport, wetted the maternal boſom that received her head, which fell on it like a tender plant, overcharged with the dews of the morning.

A moſt expreſſive and delicious ſilence prevailed for ſome moments. The baron had his eyes fixed on them, with a countenance ſo agitated by the various emotions that oppreſſed his heart, that the kind and conſiderate counteſs could not repreſs the riſing pity for a ſelf-convicted man.

She

She took his hand, and whilſt ſhe embraced her friends with the other hand, ſhe ſaid, "My dear Elinor, *this* is your father, the parent you have ſo long wiſhed to know, who now acknowledges you with pride of heart, and *ſolicits* your affection in return."

She inſtantly threw herſelf on her knees —"Forgive me, my father, if I have been remiſs in my duty to *you*. Exceſs of happineſs has diſordered my ſenſes. Even now I doubt the reality of theſe bleſſings that ſurround me. A father—a mother to the poor forlorn Elinor! O, is it indeed true? Is this *indeed* my mother?" cried ſhe, paſſionately kiſſing Lady P * * *'s hand. "Have I a father to bleſs me alſo?" preſſing his ſupporting hand to her lips.

He could not ſpeak. He raiſed and placed her by Lady P * * *; then taking hold of the earl's arm, he haſtily quitted the apartment, to ſeek conſolation from his friend, and recover his ſpirits.

"My dear Lord B * *," ſaid he, mournfully, "let no man depart from the paths

paths of rectitude to gratify inordinate wiſhes, or to purſue the phantoms of ambition and avarice. A certain diſgrace and puniſhment is cloſely attached to unwarrantable views. I have loſt the affection of a daughter, and by criminal indulgencies have poſſibly ruined the object of my unjuſtifiable avarice, who, had he been more humbly educated—with more circumſcribed proſpects—might have turned out a uſeful member of ſociety. I have drawn upon myſelf remorſe, ſhame, and reproach. That amiable girl, whom the proudeſt parent might glory in, can neither reverence nor love me. The greater her excellencies, the greater my condemnation. O, my friend, I knew not, I could not judge what would be my feelings on this diſcovery. I adore, I doat on my child, but *her* heart ſpeaks not for me. The coldneſs of her eye, when bent on my face, and the animation that ſprung to her expreſſive countenance, when kiſſing the hand of her mother, declared the nature of *her* feelings—undiſguiſed, natural, and affecting."

He

He turned from the earl, unable to reſtrain thoſe drops which internal anguiſh cauſed to overflow from his eyes—ſo painful, ſo overwhelming is ſelf-reproach.

The earl exerted his friendly eloquence to conſole him, and tried to perſuade him that it was impoſſible Elinor ſhould diſtinguiſh in the duty due to her parents.

"Knowing nothing of your ſtory," ſaid he, "ſhe cannot diſcriminate between you and her mother, or ſuppoſe otherwiſe than that both were equally involved in the ſame fault—both had deſerted their truſts—and given her up to the protection of another. Female tenderneſs," added he, "imperceptibly attracts. The embraces and exclamations of Lady P * * * made their way to her heart. Maternal affection, very naturally, is deareſt to the daughter, becauſe free from reſtraint, and more congenial with her own feelings."

"Ah!" cried the baron, interrupting him, "it is in vain you would ſeek to ſooth a conſcious troubled ſpirit. I find myſelf unequal to ſupport the evils I have ſo juſtly incurred—the contempt of the world,

world, the indignation of thoſe who would have been deprived of their juſt rights, had my fraudulent ſchemes ſucceeded, and, at the beſt, only the cold pity of my family and friends. Why—why," ſaid he, ſtamping furiouſly, "did I ever conceive a plan of ſuch baſe duplicity, or why weakly recede from it? O, that boy! that infernal woman! who have blaſted every hope, and driven me to a reſource that covers me with ſhame, infamy, and eternal remorſe. Would that I had never ſeen Elinor! or that the ſword of Mellor had cut the thread of his opponent's life! Then the ſhameful ſtory had been buried in oblivion—then that fooliſh, obſtinate, faſtidious Glendower might have been brought to have acknowledged Elinor, and all would have been well."

The earl was aſtoniſhed and provoked. He ſaw *ſelf* was ſtill predominant with the baron, and that the natural depravity of his mind rendered all his good purpoſes unſettled; no real paternal affection, no true generoſity of heart or greatneſs of mind to ſupport the conſequences of his errors with

with dignity and contrition, exiſted in his boſom. On the contrary, the juſtice rendered to his child was plainly the reſult of diſappointment and paſſion, not the conviction of a contrite and generous ſpirit that deſerved countenance.

Both gentlemen were ſilent ſome moments, The baron traverſed the room, his hand to his forehead, whilſt the earl was loſt in thought, on reviewing late occurrences. At length—"I am willing, my lord," ſaid he, "to place your preſent emotions and unjuſtifiable expreſſions to the account of anxiety, and a proper ſenſe of your conduct, which diſorders your ſenſes. Recollect yourſelf, and bear with manly fortitude the reproach of your own heart, and the degradation of your character, which you have deſervedly incurred. You have nothing to fear from the good and generous Elinor. Tell your own ſtory; though her *heart* may condemn, her tongue will not upbraid you. On the contrary, her ſweet and gentle ſpirit may ſpeak peace to yours, and her tenderneſs obliterate the remembrance of the

the injuries pride and avarice induced you to commit. Excuſe my freedom," added he, ſeeing his cheeks crimſoned, "and let this be our laſt converſation on a ſubject ſo unpleaſing to both."

"With all my heart," replied the baron briſkly. "I need not volunteer mortification. It muſt be owned your lordſhip does not ſpare me."

"You would think very contemptibly of me," returned the earl, "if I temporized. You were pleaſed to entruſt me with your ſecret; I have ſpoken the ſentiments of an honeſt man; of a man, too, who feels he has obligations to your friendly ſervices, and would rejoice to ſee you happy, and reſtored to the paths of rectitude, from motives that may do equal honour to your heart and your judgment."

"Well, well, my lord," ſaid he, peeviſhly, "you perform what you think is *your* duty, I muſt follow *mine*. I will ſee my daughter alone; ſhe ſhall know *all*; perhaps *ſhe* may be as indulgent to me as her *father elect*."

"I am

"I am ſorry," returned the earl, coldly, "to ſee you ſo unjuſt and capricious: but I hope your lovely, tender, generous daughter will reconcile you to yourſelf and to your friends."

The earl returned to the company a little diſconcerted and diſpleaſed, while the baron went into the garden to recover and prepare himſelf for a conference with Elinor.

During their abſence a moſt tender ſcene had taken place in the parlour. The heart of Lady P * * * had undergone an inſtantaneous change. Never till then had ſhe felt the delicious ſenſations of maternal love. A cold apathy had always frozen up every ſpark of natural affection; no tender feelings had ever acknowledged the quondam Mr. Tudor as dear to her. Neglected by her huſband, not particularly attached to her ſuppoſed child, the ſweets of domeſtic life were unknown to her, and ſhe ſought, in diſſipation and frivolous company, a reſource againſt diſcontent and ſolitude.

The

The inſtant ſhe beheld Elinor was the laſt moment of her indifference, and the ſtagnation of her ſenſibility. A thouſand nameleſs ſenſations ſprung to her heart when ſhe embraced her daughter—a daughter ſo beautiful, ſo inexpreſſibly intereſting. She almoſt devoured her. Delicious tears ſtole down her cheeks as ſhe preſſed her to her boſom, and once ſhe exclaimed—"Cruel baron! what years of bliſs have you deprived me of, by your barbarous duplicity!"

As to Elinor—O, it is not poſſible to pourtray the exceſs of *her* delight, the joy that danced in her eyes, and played about her heart. She had a mother!—a mother, whoſe rapturous fondneſs made large amends for every hour of ſorrow, every moment of pain.

Her head was nearly giddy with tranſport; and had not the conſiderate counteſs and the ardent and aſtoniſhed lover, by their timely congratulations, and claims to partake in the general felicity, in ſome degree checked the overflow of joy in both mother and daughter, it is probable both might

might have been ſufferers from exceſs of pleaſure.

The earl had ſcarcely been in the room five minutes, and had juſt anſwered the interrogatories of the ladies reſpecting the baron, when a ſervant entered, requeſting Miſs Maſham would ſtep into the cedar parlour, accompanied only by Lord L * * * and Lady P * * *. They roſe immediately, neither of them compoſed in their minds, or ſteady in their ſteps. They entered, and ſaw the baron, who was extremely agitated.

"Lady P * * *," ſaid he, "you have already heard the confeſſion I muſt now make to your daughter; I ſent for you, however, to do you juſtice—to *clear you* from the crime of deſerting your child. It is proper alſo that Lord L * * * ſhould be preſent."

"Ah, Sir!" cried Elinor, "am I not then *your* child alſo? Did you not call yourſelf *my father?*"

Theſe queſtions, in a tone of tender anxiety, were more than he could ſtand; he threw himſelf into a chair, and covered

his face with a handkerchief. She threw herſelf on her knees, "I beſeech you, I entreat you, ſir, to ſpare yourſelf a recital that thus diſtreſſes your mind; it is ſufficient happineſs to me if I am your acknowledged daughter. Events of moment, of conſequence to your intereſts, induced you to place me in the care of that good man Mr. Maſham: I deſire to know no more. Never ſhall my parents humble themſelves by confeſſions that muſt give them pain, or leſſen that dignity of character which claims my reverence."

He withdrew the handkerchief, and looked ſteadily at her. "Elinor," ſaid he, "you muſt not preſcribe to me; it is a humiliation I deſerve, to bluſh before my child. Hear my ſtory in ſilence: I will gloſs over no circumſtance—ſeek for no extenuation. I am humbled, I am puniſhed, but I will deceive you no more."

She trembled at the ſeverity of his manner, and did not dare to oppoſe his will any farther. He bid her riſe and be ſeated. She obeyed, and he then went over his

whole ſtory, ſuch as we have ſeen it at different periods. He concluded the recital with an addreſs to Lord L * * *. "I have been informed, my lord, of your generous and diſintereſted affection for my daughter, when ſhe was a nameleſs orphan, without friends or fortune. If her value be not leſſened in your eyes, by her near connexion with a worthleſs parent—"

"Pardon me, my lord, for interrupting you," cried Lord L * * *: "no circumſtance whatever can take from my high eſtimation of this lady's virtues. I do honour to myſelf when I declare, that as neither rank nor fortune can enhance her worth in my eyes, ſo neither can the dignity of her character ſuffer any degradation from the errors of others. She is more exalted by innate greatneſs of ſoul, than raiſed to conſequence from the adventitious circumſtance of birth."

Elinor bluſhed at the animation and love that ſparkled in the eyes of Lord L * * *, whilſt the baron looked conſcious and uneaſy.

"Well,

"Well then, my lord, ſuch being the nature of your ſentiments, I here give that ſanction to your union which the law allows me. The ſettlements ſhall ſoon be drawn, I truſt to your ſatisfaction, and within ten days my daughter ſhall bury the remembrance of a father's injuſtice in the arms of a deſerving huſband."

He left the room abruptly, without receiving the rapturous thanks Lord L * * * had begun to expreſs: but Lady P * * *, though almoſt drowned in tears, joined the hands of the two lovers.

"Henceforth," ſaid ſhe, "I have *two* children. My deareſt Elinor, your mother never lived till now. Time, I hope, will reconcile the baron to himſelf, and enable him to ſhare in the happineſs that awaits you."

Lord L * * * bent his knee to thank her, whilſt the delighted Elinor, in the embraces of a mother, found that delicious tranſport no words could deſcribe.

They returned to their friends, and mutual congratulations took place. The baron met them at their meals, but he was ſilent and reſerved. The earl and he ſoon ſettled every preliminary for marriage ſettlements, and Elinor's fortune was a very noble one; the baron being rich, notwithſtanding all his exceſſes—for avarice had always taken the lead, even in his pleaſures: but now, in his deſigns for Elinor, he was profuſe, as if he ſought, by uncommon liberality, to atone for his former injuſtice.

Every one ſtudied to raiſe his ſpirits by cheerfulneſs. His amiable daughter was attentive and affectionate to a degree that often ſeemed to oppreſs him.

"Elinor," ſaid he one day, "do not be *oſtentatious* in the duty of a daughter; every mark of your affection is an implied reproach. What are my claims in being the author of your being? None. I deſerted you—I ſought to rob you of your birthright—to throw you among the dregs of the people; I importuned Maſham to ſend you to ſome low trade, to earn your exiſtence

exiſtence by your hands. I allowed him only thirty pounds yearly for your ſupport, and even that I grudged; and was deſirous of detaching you from him, that in a humble ſituation all poſſibility of your being diſcovered might prevent future inquietude. I am above diſguiſing my ſentiments now. I affected an anxiety I did not feel; and ſo that you were diſpoſed of, I was indifferent how or to whom; though—ſtart not when I confeſs that a certificate of your death would have given me more perfect heart's eaſe. Providence, I find too late, never ſanctions injuſtice, and rarely permits the wicked to triumph in the completion of their ſchemes. You were well revenged in the anxiety and vexation attached to me, from the conduct of him ſo unjuſtly adopted."

"Dear ſir," cried Elinor, "do not reflect on the paſt; let us look forward. Have I no obligations to you for your voluntary kindneſs? Has not your heart ſpoken in my favour? Have you not condeſcended to the moſt painful relations, that you might acknowledge me as your

own, and allow me claims that fill my whole ſoul with delight? Dear ſir, let me entreat you to make no further ſelf-accuſations; I cannot bear it. Had I not been a ſtranger to my birth, I ſhould never have known the tranſport of having a father and a mother to own me."

The baron ſhook his head—"You are in an error. When my heart *did* ſpeak in your favour, I had no thoughts of reſtoring you to your rights—of giving you to your real mother; my plan was to unite George to Lady Suſan Delamere, and prevail on Mrs. Glendower to own you as *her* child. His folly and wickedneſs defeated the firſt part, and her obſtinate refuſal to countenance a new deception, entirely baffled the deſign ſo neceſſary to my peace. Paſſion, reſentment, and a temporary remorſe did the reſt. In the warmth of my feelings I communicated my ſecret to the earl, without any reſerve. I will not deny but that I afterwards regretted my confidence: but repentance availed not. I had committed myſelf to him, and his honour and integrity permitted no relapſe,

no

no temporiſing; I was compelled to proceed, and avow my criminal injuſtice, my unworthy deception to the world. And now," added he, "what is the duty or love you owe to me? Human nature will ſpeak; neither affection nor reſpect can follow the man who is unjuſt, deſpicable, and whoſe actions have always been the reſult of unworthy motives—uninfluenced either by principle or honour. No, Elinor, no; you can neither love nor reverence me. I am not to be deceived by appearances which only tend to wound me deeper, by a conſciouſneſs that the heart has no ſhare in them."

"Ah, ſir!" cried ſhe, "what then can I do to give you pleaſure?"

"Nothing. I have ſhaken hands with pleaſure. We meet no more. I wiſh to ſee *you* ſettled; and all that remains for me will be retirement from the great world, whoſe reproaching eye ſhall never meet mine."

He quitted the room immediately, nor after that morning did they ever meet but in company with all their friends. Elinor

was deeply touched. The humiliation and ſelf-upbraiding of a father had ſomething ſo terrible in it as to occaſion a moſt heart-felt concern. She was ſenſible that he was right in his concluſions. She had always felt an unaccountable diſlike to him; and having accuſtomed herſelf to think unfavourably of all his words and actions, her mind did not readily turn to the duty and reverence her parent had a right to claim.

She pitied his conflicts; ſhe was hurt at the mortification he had drawn upon himſelf. She tried to love and reſpect him, but it was not voluntary—it was not what ſhe felt for Lady P * * *, whom her heart opened to receive as its deareſt inmate. The attentions to one was an act of duty dictated by compaſſion and ſituation; to the other, her affections flew without attending to time or circumſtances. She already adored her mother, who, on her part, already doated on her lovely child.

"Ah!" ſaid ſhe, once, to the counteſs, "I can now comprehend the nature of your feelings,

feelings, when parted from Lord L * * *. My boſom was then ſteeled againſt thoſe ſocial affections no object had ever excited, and which I thought myſelf incapable of feeling. Alas! had I been the parent of my Elinor in early life, that cold indifference towards domeſtic duties had never, I am ſure, been natural to me. How many follies, how many errors might have been unknown to me, had my heart been earlier awakened to the ſweets of maternal affection!"

Lord L * * *, tremblingly alive to the peace of his lovely Elinor, ſaw her anxiety at the extreme depreſſion which had taken hold of the baron. Both he and the earl wearied themſelves to enliven his ideas, and to pay him every reſpect and attention. He appeared perfectly inſenſible; was neither gratified, nor did he repreſs their kindneſs; his mind ſeemed occupied by deep reflection, and he took every opportunity to detach himſelf from company.

The day at length arrived that gave to Lord L * * * the moſt amiable of her

ſex. His tranſports were undeſcribable, and above all reſtraint. The charming Elinor gave her hand without even a ſhew of reluctance. Senſibility, delicacy, and affection animated her expreſſive countenance. Above the affectation of diſguiſing her ſentiments, with a modeſt frankneſs, agreeable to her character, ſhe owned, that in contributing to the happineſs of Lord L * * *, ſhe eſtabliſhed her own.

The earl and counteſs, with Lady P * * *, partook largely in their moſt perfect content. The baron declined the natural office of beſtowing his daughter's hand on her lover, requeſting the earl would be his proxy. The deſire was ſingular, and gave Elinor ſome pain: but he turned it off with a compliment to the earl, as the moſt worthy to beſtow a bleſſing on his worthy ſon.

Six days paſſed rapidly on, winged with delight, among this truly happy family. The baron, indeed, preſerved the ſame taciturnity, the ſame inflexibility of features; and his perſevering ſolemnity was

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the only drawback on the felicity of his daughter, now Lady L * * *, who was perfectly adored by her husband, her mother, and by the earl and countess.

Every one saw that any efforts to amuse him only gave additional pain. He had fixed the idea in his mind that every body must despise him, and his pride could not brook forced civilities; he therefore seldom appeared but at the dinner hour, and passed his time either in the library, or wandering round the gardens.

The third day after Elinor's marriage, gossip Fame had reported through the village that Miss Elinor was found out to be a great lord's daughter, with a power of money, and was now married to the earl's son, their young lord.

The joy of old Malcolm was great and sincere: even Mrs. Malcolm, with tears, confessed "she was good and generous, and so deserved to be a lady; though sartainly 'twas a strange thing for her to be so lucky."

As for Bridget, whose mind was occupied by envy and malice, her heart was

ready to burſt with ſpleen and rage: but when her father commanded her to dreſs herſelf decently, and go with him to pay their duty, her ſmothered paſſions burſt out, ſhe literally roared with ſpite, and refuſed to go—"for why, ſhe hated your proud upſtarts; and as to being a lord's daſter, it was all a ſham; and if ſhe was, ſhe muſt be a baſtard; and for her to be the lady of the village, ſhe couldn't bear it—that ſhe couldn't."

Malcolm, ſince his return to them, had learnt to aſſume more conſequence, and had even occaſionally brought both mother and daughter to acknowledge his authority; he therefore ſternly ordered Bridget to "hold her prating, ſaucy tongue, and put on her clothes, for go ſhe ſhould." The poor envious, vain creature, finding ſhe muſt obey, was reſolved to make a figure.

A ſcarlet velvet petticoat, with a brocaded gown ſtiff as buckram, flowers as large as a plate, and a large rump behind, with yellow ſleeve-knots and ſtomacher, formed the body part of her dreſs; a very

ſmall

ſmall horſe-ſhoe quilted cap, with high top-knot and pinners, over a load of black ſhining hair, drawn up tight by the roots, a fine bead necklace, and a fan in her hand, completed the appearance of this quondam lady's maid.

Malcolm fretted and ſtormed at her "fool's coat:" but here Bridget ſtood her ground; not a particle of her finery ſhould be leſſened; "it was given to her, and ſure ſhe had a right to wear her own."

In this attire ſhe was introduced into the parlour. The good old man had juſt begun a compliment to the married pair, when he was interrupted and confounded by a violent ſhout of laughter from Lady P * * *. This lady, who was paſſionately fond of the ridiculous, and enjoyed, without reſtraint or conſideration, an opportunity to divert herſelf at the expence of others, could not ſuppreſs the overflowing of her mirth when ſhe beheld Bridget; and as it generally happens that an extravagant laugh from one perſon has a ſingular effect upon others in company, eſpecially when the object of ridicule is obviouſly

obviouſly before them, neither the earl, the counteſs, nor Lord L * * * could refrain from joining in the laugh. Lady L * * * alone commanded her features; and ſeeing poor Malcolm greatly diſconcerted, ſhe aroſe, and with the ſweeteſt condeſcenſion taking his hand, ſaid, "My good friend, I rejoice to ſee you. I know your heart partakes in my happineſs. Let me preſent you to my mother."

He ſhrunk back, confuſed and mortified: but ſhe drew him gently on towards Lady P * * *, who was trying to compoſe herſelf, by turning from Bridget to the really venerable looking old man.

"This, madam," ſaid Lady L * * *, "is a worthy man, good and reſpectable, the friend of my youth, and always my well-wiſher—Mr. Malcolm, ſteward to the late counteſs of B * *."

She conſiderately added this laſt compliment, to raiſe him into conſequence with himſelf; adding, "And this lady, my good Mr. Malcolm, is my mother; Baron P * * * is my father—I am happily reſtored to my parents, and I am perſuaded

ſuaded you congratulate me with ſincerity both on my birth and my marriage.

"I do, I do," cried he, tears dropping from his eyes. "My dear, good, generous young lady, God has rewarded you. You are now a great lady, but not more honoured than you deſerve to be; and let me ſay, (turning and looking alternately at Lord L * * * and Lady P * * *,) that it is you, my lord and lady, who have cauſe to be proud that you can call ſuch a bleſſing your own. She was always gracious, and would do honour to the king, (God bleſs him,) if he had ſuch a one by his ſide."

They were all much pleaſed with the old man's compliment. Lord L * * * ſhook him by the hand, Lady P * * * ſpoke very kindly, and our heroine with difficulty repreſſed her tears.

"Well, Bridget," ſaid he, "make your obedience to our noble lord and lady. Why don't ye ſpeak? Why d'ye ſtand like a fool?"

"Dear gracious father! you fluſter one ſo! To be ſure—" and ſhe dropped a courteſy

courteſy to the very ground, ſo low, that it was with difficulty, and with the help of one hand, that ſhe recovered herſelf again; while Lady P * * * crammed her handkerchief into her mouth—"To be ſure," proceeded ſhe, "I am mortal glad to ſee Miſs Elinor—Dear gracious! I mean Miſs Elinor that was — has turned out to be a great Lord's dafter; ſeeing as how all the pariſh ſaid her belonged to nobody."

"You fool! you blockhead!" exclaimed her father, who was haſtily going to her, had not Lady L * * * caught his hand—"I beg you will not interrupt her," ſaid ſhe: but he held up his cane, though not allowed to ſpeak. She pertly went on—

"Lord help us! why father needn't be in ſuch a pother, and call one names; I only ſays what the people ſays. To be ſure I be very glad to ſee that things be a turned out as they be, though I can't tell how it could be made out; but I wiſh my lord and Miſs Elinor that was very happy, and hope ſhe won't meet with ſuch a falſe-

hearted

hearted loon as that naſty rogue Sandy was to me;" and then dropping another low courteſy, ſhe went back to her father, who could not command himſelf from beſtowing a few epithets upon her that ſhe by no means liked.

Lady P * * *, who was delighted with Bridget, without any conſideration for the father's feelings, wanted her to make a farther exhibition.

"Sure, Mr. Malcolm," ſaid ſhe, "your daughter ſpeaks perfectly well, and is very handſomely dreſſed. She looks like ſomebody among the frights I have ſeen here."

"There now—you ſee what her ladyſhip's worſhip ſays. *She* knows when one is dreſſed, though you don't. Pleaſe you, my lady, father doth ſnub one ſo, when one is tricked out a little bit like a gentlewoman, that if I did not ſtand to it ſtoutly, why all my rich coates and rump gownds would be mildewed in the draers; and Miſs Elinor there, that was, knows, as I may ſay, that I have a power of good clothes, though that wicked rogue my huſband

huſband laid his claws upon all the beſt things of vally that he could find."

Old Malcolm could bear it no longer. He pulled her by the arm, to "come away, and not be ſo pert and troubleſome." She dragged her arm from him in a huff, and was prefacing another harangue with "An pleaſe you my lady," when paſſion ſo overcame her father, that he laid hold of the rump of the gown, and with ſome force pulled her towards the door.

Poor Bridget, interrupted in her eloquence, and ſuddenly dragged backwards, loſt both her ſpeech and her legs, and came down plump on the floor with a loud ſcream.

The company could no longer repreſs their mirth; a general burſt of laughter ſent poor Malcolm, bitterly mortified, out of the room, whilſt the fallen fair one was ſcrambling up, ſcolding and crying like a mad woman; the noiſe bringing in two or three of the ſervants, to whom ſhe complained of the injury done to her perſon and ſilk rump.

Unable

Unable to contain themſelves, *they* were retiring, when ſhe laid hold of one, ſaying, "ſhe was alamed by the hard blow, and ſhe would give it to the ould man—that ſhe would—to make her ſuch a ſpeckledum before people; ſhe knowed no good wou'd come on't, and ſhe'd ſee him hanged before ſhe'd ever come to make ſeremonies again, and to be laughed at ſo—" gathering up one of her yellow ſleeve-knots and her fan, both of which had fallen to the ground by her retrograde fall. She comforted herſelf "that it was God's marcy he hadn't a-pulled off her rump, and then ſhe ſhould have been in a pretty pickle, ſeeing as how ſhe couldn't have knowed how to mend it again."

She limped out with the ſervants, while Lady P * * * was almoſt convulſed with laughing.

Her good-natured daughter felt for poor Malcolm. She ſent a meſſage to him, that ſhe ſhould be glad to ſee him alone, the next day, or any time agreeable to himſelf. The whole party were extremely diverted with Bridget. Lady P * * * proteſted

proteſted ſhe would accompany her daughter, ſome morning, to the houſe. Nothing could be more pleaſant, ſhe ſaid, than the converſation of ſuch an original, to enliven the dull ſameneſs of the country.

"Ah!" cried the counteſs, "I thought you had already regretted the hours, I may ſay years, loſt in diſſipation among the gay world, and could now find pleaſures in the country, among a circle of your friends, without complaining of its dulneſs."

"You do me juſtice," anſwered ſhe. "I do indeed look back with pain and regret on my paſt life; I feel more delicious ſenſations in the name of mother, than I ever experienced from being an admired belle; yet a mind accuſtomed to variety cannot always reliſh retirement immediately. Sudden reformations are rarely permanent. I am willing to amuſe myſelf. My temper is conſtitutionally cheerful; and the unexpected happineſs of finding ſuch a daughter, of acquiring ſuch a ſon, is ſurely calculated to add to, not to diminiſh, my ſtock of habitual gaiety."

"I ſtand

"I ſtand corrected," returned the counteſs, ſmiling, "and ſhall be happy if you can extract amuſement in any ſhape, whilſt you ſo largely contribute towards our pleaſures here."

It was on the ſeventh morning after Lord L * * * became the happy huſband of his adored Elinor, when, coming down before the ladies, he ſaw the baron already in the parlour, his head reſting on his hand. Reſpectfully ſaluting him, the baron returned a gentle motion of his head, and, after a moment's ſilence, ſaid, "Lord L * * *, I ſhall this day leave the caſtle—within two hours, indeed. I depend upon your honour not to mention my deſign prematurely. When I am gone, you will find two letters on my dreſſing-table. Prepare your dear Elinor for the contents. As to Lady P * * *, we have many years been ſeparated in minds; no uniſon of ſoul has exiſted between us. Each had ſeparate pleaſures, and purſued them with avidity. I accuſe her not of diſhonouring me, though certainly her conduct could do me no credit.

But

But I have no right to complain; ſhe can freely recriminate. My lord, I wiſh her happy. She has yet the power of being ſo. That power exiſts not with me. I know myſelf. I will never be the object of contempt to others; never bear the oblique reflection, the ſcornful glance, the whiſpering impertinence of ſuch as I have lorded it over—ſuch as have watched to catch a ſmile from Baron P * * *. I have written to the king, and have reſigned all my employments, and have buſied myſelf this laſt week in ſettling all my affairs. My own paternal eſtate in Wales I ſhall reſerve for myſelf; the one in Glouceſterſhire, my mother's jointure, which fell to me ſome time ago, I have made over to my daughter."

Seeing Lord L * * * was about to ſpeak, he continued. "Do not interrupt, but hear *me*. My plan is determined on. Nothing can be offered that ſhall induce me to recede one tittle from the line I have chalked out for my future proceedings. My eſtates in Herefordſhire are jointured on Lady P * * *; ſhe

ſhall have immediate poſſeſſion. After her death they are Elinor's. I have purchaſed annuities for Mrs. Glendower and her ſon; they will encumber no one. Once in ſix months you ſhall all hear from me whilſt I live; and I ſhall take meaſures that my death may be announced, whenever it happens. No endeavours to trace me will be effective. I have been ſome time employed in making every thing ripe for my deſign. All is now completed. What I expect from you, as a man of honour, is, that you make no attempts to watch or follow me. I could have gone away unknown to you, but I chooſe to ſhew my confidence in your integrity; and as every perſuaſion, every endeavour to make any alteration in my reſolutions muſt be fruitleſs, I expect that you do not produce my letters, nor announce my departure till the evening. And now, my dear L * * *, take my laſt bleſſing, my ardent prayers for your happineſs. Let my example teach you to govern your paſſions, and let honour and integrity guide

guide every action of your life. Seek for happineſs, where alone it can be found, in the boſom of your family; never let avarice and ambition obtain an aſcendancy over your mind. And oh! I charge you, guard the peace of your dear Elinor. Sacred is the truſt ſhe has placed in your hands; her happineſs, both in this world and the next, you are anſwerable for. A miſerable prodigal, *I* have ſquandered away all the treaſures that Heaven was pleaſed to bleſs me with. My example turned the heart and corrupted the mind of my wife. A child, who would have been the boaſt and bleſſing of my life, I baſely threw from my protection, and left her, as I believed, to the charity of ſtrangers. I embittered the life of a worthy friend; I meditated, by a ſyſtem of duplicity, to rob a family of their legal rights, to acquire riches I did not want, and gratify ambition at the expence of virtue. Such have been the crooked paths I purſued, the labyrinths of vice in which I entangled myſelf, and in which I loſt honour,

honour, happineſs, and reputation. Peace can viſit me no more. The reproach of my own heart, and the upbraiding eye of every friend, is too much to ſupport. I fly from the latter, though I cannot ſhrink from the pangs of conſcience. What time may do I know not. I go to try. Once more, my lord, accept my beſt wiſhes; and remember—it is my laſt ſolemn charge—remember, that virtue and integrity can alone ſecure peace to your boſom; and that true happineſs is only to be met with in the ſociety of your family, in the ſweets of domeſtic life."

The baron pronounced the laſt words with much emotion, and immediately quitted the room.

Lord L * * * had not recovered from the agitations of *his* mind before he was joined by the family. The mutual compliments of the morning prevented his diſcompoſure from being remarked, and gave him time to collect himſelf. In a few minutes after the baron entered, with the ſame countenance as uſual. The repaſt was enlivened by occaſional ſallies of

pleaſantries from Lady P * * *, who evidently ſought to engage and amuſe her huſband.

Her charming daughter glanced a pitying, anxious eye on the baron: but he had ſo ſternly prohibited all marks of affectionate attention, that ſhe was obliged to be extremely cautious in her addreſs to him. He obſerved an inflexible, ſerious deportment, and a ſingle compliment, addreſſed in general to the company, were the only words he ſpoke.

He quitted the room the moment breakfaſt was over, with a look at Lord L * * *, whoſe eye was upon him, and who perfectly comprehended what that look meant to enforce upon his mind.

Accuſtomed, for ſome days paſt, to his taciturnity and abſence, they lamented, without being ſurpriſed at, his continued ſolemnity; and Lady P * * * ſaid ſhe thought the only chance of reſtoring him to peace and cheerfulneſs would be for the whole party to propoſe going to London. Though this plan did not meet the wiſhes of the counteſs or Lady L * * *, yet

the plea urged for ſuch a journey could not meet with any oppoſition, and the earl undertook to mention it.

When the dinner hour came, a ſervant acquainted Lady P * * * that the baron went out on horſeback, attended only by his valet, and ſaid he ſhould not return to dinner. They were not alarmed by this meſſage, though they regretted his ſolitary diſpoſition.

Mean time Lord L * * * had gone to his dreſſing-room the moment he had left the caſtle, and found two letters in the table-drawer, the ink ſcarcely dry on the covers of addreſs. One was for Lady P * * *, the other for Elinor, or, as we ought to call her, Lady L * * *.

The taſk upon him was a painful one. He knew the ſweet ſenſibility of his darling wife, and felt it irkſome to break in upon their mutual happineſs by the diſcloſure of her father's ſtrange reſolution and flight: but the event muſt be known, and he went in ſearch of his father, to have the benefit of his advice.

The earl was more ſhocked than ſurpriſed. He had for ſome days apprehended the gloom on his ſpirits would take ſome fatal turn, and indeed trembled for his life. "Unhappy man!" ſaid he, "his paſſions ſtill predominate. That pride, which induced him to ſacrifice an innocent child to the gratification of ambition and a family name—that moſt reprehenſible ruling paſſion—renders him incapable of ſupporting the reproach and contumely he has drawn upon himſelf. To the diſappointment of his vain ſchemes we owe that confeſſion which has reſtored our beloved Elinor to her birthright: but it was made in the moment of paſſion; and when he came to reflect on the conſequences to himſelf, he had not ſufficient greatneſs of mind to ſubmit to deſerved humiliation, or in the happineſs of his child to bury the reproaches of his heart. On the contrary, I am convinced that he has not only repented of the juſtice prompted by paſſion, not principle, but that even he has encouraged an unjuſt diſlike to the innocent

object he has ſo greatly injured. In ſhort," continued the earl, "his heart, his mind is corrupt; and if he does feel any remorſe, I fear it proceeds more from diſappointment and vexation than from proper motives. A man, who has purſued a ſyſtem of vice for ſo many years, is become callous to the feelings of virtuous ſenſibility; it is wounded pride that drives him from ſociety; and one bad paſſion, improperly indulged, has ſwallowed up all the gentler ones."

Lord L * * * moſt readily ſubſcribed to the juſtneſs of his father's ſentiments. He felt little for the baron, but much for his beloved Elinor; however *he* only could ſoften the painful intelligence, and ſooth her to compoſure by tender participation. In the evening he requeſted her company in the library, whilſt the earl undertook to open the affair to Lady P * * *.

This lady was really more ſincerely grieved than the earl gave her credit for. The late diſcovery, her huſband's melancholy and diſtreſs, the new and delightful

emotions that filled her boſom, from the endearments of her daughter, had altogether awakened her ſenſibility; and that tenderneſs of diſpoſition, which had for ſo many years lain dormant, was now rouſed into action, and ſhe certainly felt a revived affection for her huſband, and an ardent wiſh for future domeſtic comfort.

Her grief was real and violent. She flew to the arms of her daughter—they mingled tears and regrets for the unhappy baron. Lady L * * * felt the moſt exquiſite ſorrow. She forgot the injuſtice of the father, and only lamented that *ſhe* was the unfortunate cauſe that had driven him from ſociety; and had it been through any curious exertions of hers, to trace her origin, that the diſcovery had been effected, ſhe could not have forgiven herſelf. Her only conſolation aroſe from her perfect innocence of every ſtep taken to prove her birth, until her claims were eſtabliſhed.

The earl, his lady, and Lord L * * * were unwearied in their endeavours to comfort and ſooth the afflicted mother

and

and daughter. It was plain the valet was in the ſecret of his maſter, and the letters which he left explained every particular of his fortune, which he had reſigned over to them as effectually as if he no longer exiſted.

As thoſe letters contained little more than a recapitulation of his ſentiments ſpoken to Lord L * * *, and as through the whole might be traced the ſorrow and vexation of a man diſappointed in his favourite views of ambition, and the abſurd pride of aggrandizing the family name, (as he acknowledged that he could not bear the loſs of conſequence, or the ſneers of thoſe who would deſpiſe the injuſtice and duplicity of his conduct,) it is unneceſſary to enlarge on the contents of ſuch letters which did very little honour to the principles of the writer.

Lady P * * *, as ſhe had herſelf obſerved, poſſeſſed a conſtitutional gaiety that would not permit ſorrow to be long an inmate of her boſom. She was much ſooner conſoled than her daughter. To *her* upright and unadulterated mind, the

more worthleſs the baron appeared, on a review of his whole conduct, and the principles by which it was governed, the more he appeared an object of pity and regret in her eyes. She thought, if he could have been induced to reſide with his family, a change might have been wrought in his diſpoſition, productive of happineſs to all parties. Now he was gone to brood melancholy in ſolitude, detached from ſociety, overpowered by painful retroſpections, and without one cheering ray of future comfort.

Lord L * * * beheld her ſilently ſtruggling with ſorrow, that ſhe might not communicate pain to his boſom, and was convinced a change of ſcene was requiſite to divert her thoughts from dwelling on one ſad ſubject. The talk of the London journey was revived; previous to which they propoſed paſſing a week at Edinburgh, Lady P * * * never having ſeen that city.

The day was fixed for their departure; and as nothing intervened to render the journey unpleaſant, we ſhall leave them,

and

and take a review of our acquaintance in England, where the news of the baron's duplicity, Elinor's birth and marriage, the diſgrace of Mr. Glendower, his deceptions, and, in ſhort, the whole family hiſtory, with various additions and exaggerations, had engroſſed the attention of the polite world, and afforded delightful employment and gratification to all the ſcandal-mongers that thruſt themſelves among the great, and were tolerated as they contributed to their amuſement.

Mrs. Glendower, though ſeduced by artifice to be a willing ſlave to the baron's pleaſures, had, as we have ſeen in ſeveral inſtances, a mind of native integrity, that had conſtantly reproached her concurrence in a baſe deception to impoſe a ſpurious child on a mother, and deprive an innocent female of parents and of fortune.

She had inceſſantly grieved at the depravity of her ſon, and conſidered it as a ſevere retribution for the crimes ſhe had been guilty of; ſhe therefore readily concurred in the baron's wiſhes to acknowledge his daughter; nay, ſhe having once obtained a

remiſſion from the vow of ſecrecy impoſed upon her, ſhe abſolutely held him to his reſolution, by declaring if *he* reſcinded it, ſhe would go before a magiſtrate and make a full confeſſion. Thus, between her and the earl, the baron was held to his firſt purpoſe, and prevented from receding, as he might have done, when paſſion and reſentment had ſubſided.

This unfortunate mother of a worthleſs ſon heard of his departure for Ireland with ſome ſatisfaction. She hoped a contraction of his views might tend to a reformation in his conduct. She was mortified that he would not acknowledge, or even take leave of her, but ſhe allowed for the impetuoſity of his temper—naturally inflamed and ſoured by the diſappointment of his hopes.

He had been gone near a fortnight, when ſhe was ſuddenly broken in upon by a lady, who announced herſelf as Mrs. Tudor. Mrs. Glendower was at no loſs to gueſs at the perſon, though ſhe was not much pleaſed with the viſit. She received her, however, with civility. It was, indeed,

deed, the *ci-devant* Mrs. Mellor, who, having ſtill a friend in her huſband's valet, had been informed of all the preceding circumſtances, to her no ſmall mortification. Through him ſhe had learnt the reſidence of Mrs. Glendower; and being unwilling to credit a ſtory ſo deſtructive to her hopes, ſhe reſolved to learn from herſelf the truth or falſehood of intelligence ſo diſagreeable.

"I come, madam," ſaid ſhe, with the moſt dauntleſs effrontery, "to inquire of you what is become of Mr. Tudor, the ſon of Baron P * * *, who is, I am told, related to you; and if ſo, you doubtleſs muſt know of his marriage with Mrs. Mellor."

"I know not any gentleman who is entitled to bear the name of Tudor," anſwered Mrs. Glendower, coldly. "My ſon, indeed, through an unfortunate deception, was permitted to aſſume it, but is now convinced that he has no right to any name but Glendower."

"He is a villain!" cried the enraged lady. "He married me under a falſe

name, and with deceptive hopes of enjoying a title and an eſtate. He has deſerted and left me: but I will purſue him to the utmoſt verge of the earth, and deſtroy *his peace*, as he has ruined all my hopes and proſpects."

"If you only came here to threaten, madam," returned Mrs. Glendower, "I could diſpenſe with your viſit. I can compaſſionate any one who has been betrayed into error, but a vindictive ſpirit is entitled to no pity."

The inſolent woman, conſcious of her guilt, flew into a rage little ſhort of madneſs. She upbraided Mrs. Glendower in the coarſeſt terms, and vowed vengeance on her ſon, whom ſhe was determined to follow, and compel him to acknowledge her, or ſhe would *blow him up* in Ireland.

She flew out of the houſe without any ceremony, leaving the poor repentant, unhappy Mrs. Glendower overwhelmed with confuſion and ſorrow.

Hitherto ſhe had ſuffered no reproaches for her paſt miſconduct but from her own heart. The ſhocking abuſe, the cutting reflections,

reflections, thrown on her by her ſon's wife, wounded her to the very ſoul; every error in his conduct, ſhe thought, originated from her crimes. She bitterly deplored the follies of her early youth, ſaying, with a deep ſigh, "the ſins of the parents are viſited on the children; and now, indeed, I ſuffer ſeverely for the ſins of my youth."

This unfortunate woman inſtantly ſent off a letter to her worthleſs ſon; for knowing the place he had obtained, ſhe had no doubt of its reaching his hands. Every thing that an affectionate mother, anxious for his reputation and honour, could dictate, ſhe wrote, in the moſt touching terms. She conjured him to adopt a new plan for his future conduct; and as the late Mrs. Mellor was certainly his wife, if he thought it poſſible that ſhe could behave with decency, ſhe adviſed him to receive and treat her with kindneſs: but if, from circumſtances he was the beſt judge of, he had reaſon to doubt the propriety of her behaviour, it was beſt to make her a proper allowance, and ſeparate quietly,

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and without driving a woman of ſo violent a temper to extremities.

Mr. Glendower had arrived in Ireland to take poſſeſſion of his employment, but unhappily his character had come before him. The counſellor had never loſt ſight of him, and the baron's diſcovery of his birth, his deſcent from the heir of Baron P * * * to the natural ſon of Mrs. Glendower, with almoſt every vice and folly he had been guilty of, this indefatigable, reſentful huſband was perfectly acquainted with.

With every poſſible aggravation he promulgated the ſtories throughout Dublin; and the Iriſh having a high ſenſe of honour, the unfortunate Mr. Glendower, on his arrival, found himſelf univerſally ſhunned and neglected.

He bore repeated ſlights and mortifications, for ſome time, with ſmothered rage and ſecret vexation: but they became ſo notorious and painful, he ſaw himſelf ſo generally deſpiſed and neglected, that one day, in a fit of paſſion, he wrote to reſign his employment, and determined to leave Ireland immediately, and ſettle in France, where

where he was unknown, and where he could live genteelly on his annuity of ſix hundred pounds.

He was preparing for his departure on the following day, when, to his extreme aſtoniſhment, his lady was uſhered in by her friend the valet. Some papers he had in his hand dropped on the floor. "The devil!" he exclaimed. "Am I to be eternally haunted by *you?*"

"Yes," ſhe replied, with an air of malicious ſatisfaction, "yes; I am thy evil ſpirit; hope not to elude my vigilance. I am your wife—you ſhall feel that I am, and know that I will ſhare in that pitiful fortune you have deceived me into. Fooliſh as baſe, like a mean reptile you have given up your rights, and believe an improbable ſtory; you have fled from your country, and bear all the odium thrown on your character without even a ſtruggle to preſerve your conſequence, or an endeavour to retaliate on the man who deceived both you and the world. Fool! coward! to ſhrink thus meanly from your enemies—to permit your unnatural father

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to triumph, to caſt you off, and adopt a parſon's brat as his own legitimate offſpring. I could tear my fleſh, to think that I have united myſelf to a wretch ſo *contemptible!*"

Glendower, ſhocked by her unexpected and little-deſired viſit, alarmed at her violence, and at firſt overpowered by her elocution, was for ſome minutes incapable of ſpeaking. She ſaw the workings of his mind in the various changes of his countenance; and miſtaking rage for confuſion, and the trembling of his lips for cowardice, ſhe began a freſh aſſault in the moſt opprobrious terms, till, worked up almoſt to madneſs, in the irritable ſtate of his mind the riſing paſſion could no longer be ſuppreſſed—

"Inſolent, audacious woman!" he cried, in a frenzy of paſſion, "*you—you* preſume thus to upbraid me! thou bane to all my fortunes! thou baſe deſtroyer of my happineſs! thou who, taking advantage of intoxication, in a curſed hour ſeduced, beguiled me into ruin, and brought down deſtruction on my head! Yes, thy vile artifices

fices have undone me for ever. Blaſted be the day on which I firſt ſaw thee, thou contemptible adultreſs!"

Scarcely had the laſt words eſcaped from his lips before the enraged tigreſs flew at him, and gave him ſo violent a blow on his ſtomach, that recoiling from her hands, he fell back over the chair on which he had been ſitting, and daſhed his head againſt the large iron dog in the chimney.

The valet, who had maliciouſly liſtened, and enjoyed the altercation, hearing a ſhriek from both parties, haſtily entered, and ſaw his maſter to all appearance lifeleſs, and the blood flowing in torrents from his head—"What have you done?" cried he. "You have killed him!"

"No," anſwered ſhe, with inſtant preſence of mind; "he was going to ſtrike *me*; I avoided the blow, and turning after me, he fell over the chair."

The man ſhook his head—"I fear that account won't do," ſaid he: "but let us raiſe him, and ſtop the blood."

They

They found he was entirely ſenſeleſs, and they were obliged to call for help. On the entrance of two ſervants, a different ſtory was told: that while talking to her, he was ſeized with a fit, and fell backward.

No perſon could contradict her. Her appearance was that of a woman of ſome faſhion; they were ſtrangers to her; and they knew their maſter had for ſome days ſeemed diſordered in his head. Her ſtory, therefore, paſſed current with them. A ſurgeon was ſent for, and on cloſe examination he declared the ſkull to be fractured, and all poſſibility of recovery out of the queſtion.

The furious, abandoned woman felt neither ſorrow nor remorſe. She was perſuaded that ſhe could have no expectations of living with him in the ſtyle ſhe expected; all hopes of an elevated rank—of being a peereſs—were at an end.

Intereſt and a depraved heart had been her inducements to leave the counſellor for him; and whilſt ſhe had points to carry, ſhe had been the moſt engaging,

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the ſweeteſt tempered, moſt attentive woman in the world: once married, ſhe threw off the maſk, and, exaſperated to madneſs on hearing of his baſe treaty with Lady Suſan Delamere, ſhe no longer obſerved any bounds in her temper or conduct.

She knew ſhe was beautiful, and had no doubt but that ſhe might make conqueſts more brilliant than Mr. Glendower. She came over to Ireland with an intention to compel him to receive and treat her as his wife, and then his employment would entitle her to aſſume ſome conſequence: but on her arrival, her truſty confidante ſtunned her with the information that his maſter had thrown up his place, and was preparing for his departure to France.

No wonder a woman like her, diſappointed in all her views, loſt in reputation and fortune, ſhould be thrown into a paroxiſm of rage when ſhe firſt ſaw him, and that her violence confirmed his hatred; and adding to the irritability of his mind, produced a reply to her reproaches that terminated in an accident fatal and truly ſhocking,

ſhocking, when we conſider him as a young man, cut off ſuddenly, without time to repent of his notorious vices, and years of conſtant irregularities—for the wretched man died that night, without once opening his eyes, or giving any tokens of ſenſibility.

Expreſſes were ſent off to Baron P * * * and to Mrs. Glendower, the unhappy mother, while the widow took poſſeſſion of every thing, and made a *ſhew* of feeling becoming her ſituation.

At firſt the neighbours whiſpered ſome doubts reſpecting the manner in which Mr. Glendower came to his death: but as, it has been obſerved, he had no friends, the ſervants coincided with Mrs. Glendower—finding the chair down, and his head acroſs the dog; and the ſtrangeneſs of his behaviour for ſome days, corroborated by the opinion of the valet, "that his head was actually diſordered," gave a colouring to the general belief, that he expired in conſequence of a fit.

The firſt expreſs followed Lady P * * * to Edinburgh, where the family

mily party were juſt arrived. She was greatly ſhocked; for though ſhe had never felt any affection for him, nor had his conduct to her ever deſerved any, yet there was a kind of attachment from habit, a ſort of pity ſhe had felt for his fallen expectations, that gave him ſome intereſt with her; and only that morning her lovely generous daughter had been propoſing to make a genteel addition to his income.

"We ought not," ſaid ſhe, "to conſider that he has no *legal* claims; he is undoubtedly my father's ſon, the conduct and ſentiments of his mother leave us no room to queſtion it; as ſuch he is entitled to more than a moderate—to a *handſome* proviſion—more particularly as he certainly has been deceived, and is a diſappointed man. Alas!" added ſhe, "would to Heaven that my father, reconciled to himſelf, may again join his family! Surely there are no errors ſo great that repentance and amendment may not atone for. He has not the life of a fellow-creature to anſwer for; and ſhort of *that*, all other crimes

crimes admit of forgiveneſs. But the worſt that can be ſaid of *him* does not amount to *crimes*."

So, no doubt, believed the amiable Lady L * * *: but ſhe knew little of the baron's character. Ellen Glendower was not the only female he had ſeduced and ruined both in body and mind. Two particularly unhappy young creatures he had lured from the paths of virtue, and, after a time, abandoned to want and wretchedneſs. One had actually committed ſuicide, on hearing that her mother had died of a broken heart, in conſequence of being forſaken by her child, and that child becoming loſt and infamous.

The other poor wretch, when deſerted by him, became abandoned, not only in her perſon, but in her mind. She was initiated into and grew an adept in every vice, till want and diſeaſe reduced her to ſeek relief by depredations on the purſes of thoſe lured into her ſnares: ſhe was at length detected in an atrocious act, was arraigned, condemned, and tranſported; ſhe caught a fever

a fever on board the ſhip, and died without time, or even inclination, to repent of her miſdeeds.

Many beſides theſe two unfortunate girls had cauſe to execrate the baron as the author of their miſeries; and every evil deed had preſſed upon his mind, when diſappointed ambition, and the dreaded reproaches of the world, had given a final blow to his pride, and forced on him a retroſpection of his conduct, and produced the effects we have ſeen ſome time ſince.

The regret of Lady L * * * was however both natural and affecting, and was felt equally by all parties. Her generous conſideration for her half-brother obtained both their applauſe and willing concurrence.

The expreſs, therefore, that brought the information of Mr. Glendower's ſudden and untimely death gave a great ſhock to the family. They had no way of conveying intelligence to the baron; and as his ſon was entirely independent of Lady P * * *, ſhe had nothing to do or direct in the diſpoſal of the body; ſhe therefore

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ſent the meſſenger back to England, to Mrs. Glendower, not being certain if the melancholy news had been forwarded to her.

Alas! too ſoon it reached the ears of this unfortunate woman, who was then recovering ſlowly from a fever on her ſpirits, occaſioned by the many diſagreeable events that had happened. The behaviour and cruel neglect of her ſon—the ill treatment ſhe had received from his wife—and a letter from the baron, written to her ſome time after he had left his family ſo ſuddenly—had all together affected her ſpirits, and drew on her a nervous fever. It had prevented her from going into Devonſhire; and ſhe was but juſt able to leave her room, when the expreſs arrived with an account of her ſon's deplorable death.

This was a dreadful blow that ſhe was not prepared to meet. It threw her into a ſtate of dejection little ſhort of abſolute melancholy. Though ſeparated from her in early life, though cut off from all thoſe endearments that entwine about the heart

of

of an affectionate mother, yet ſhe had often contrived little plans to ſee him, unknown even to himſelf. She had been deeply intereſted in every part of his conduct—had ſhed floods of tears when hearing of his diſſolute manners and depravity of heart; all his follies, his vices, ſhe felt like daggers to her heart; and accuſing herſelf as the primary cauſe of all his exceſſes, the fatal termination of his life gave her inexpreſſible anguiſh and the bittereſt ſorrow.

"Ah!" ſaid ſhe, mentally, "what an awful leſſon could I teach to the young, the artleſs, and too credulous maiden! From the firſt hour that my erring feet carried me from the protection of my worthy parents, what painful regrets, what ſelf-upbraidings have embittered every ſucceeding day! Few have been my pleaſures—fleeting and tranſient—whilſt ſhame and remorſe have cloſely purſued me. Great God!" continued ſhe, "forgive my errors—pardon the unhappy victim that has ſuddenly appeared before thy ſacred tribunal, and grant repentance

to that wretched woman, whoſe guilt and infamy only can exceed mine! for if there be gradations in guilt, ſurely the adultreſs is ſunk to the loweſt ſtep of female depravity!"

The truly unhappy Mrs. Glendower ſent back the expreſs, without attempting to interfere in the rights of his wife, to whom ſhe freely reſigned all her claims upon any ſhare of his effects. She wrote a few lines—it was but a few that ſhe was enabled to write—and could that woman have been capable of feeling either ſorrow or remorſe, that ſhort letter would have ſpoken daggers to her heart. But ſhe was callous, and the day of retribution had not then overtaken her.

We may as well finiſh her hiſtory in this place.

The mother having given up her rights, the wife had no difficulty in eſtabliſhing her claims to the whole property of her deceaſed huſband; and as the baron had handſomely ſet him out, and he had, within a few days of his death, received two hundred and fifty pounds, ſhe got poſſeſſion

poſſeſſion of the whole; and after his funeral was over, propoſed returning to London, to make the moſt of her beauty.

The crafty valet offered to attend her. He was too deep in her ſecrets to be rejected, and in the courſe of their travelling he took advantage of her licentious diſpoſition, and became the maſter of her perſon and her purſe.

On their arrival in London ſhe very ſoon captivated an earl, at that time famous, or, to ſpeak more juſtly, *in*famous, for the variety of his amours. She remained for ſome time his favourite ſultana: but conſtancy was not his motto, and ſhe was, in turn, deſerted for a new object.

Whilſt he loved, he had been laviſh in his preſents: but as intereſt was the ſole inducement, on her ſide, to the connection, when he began to ſlacken in his offerings, his attentions ceaſed to be deſirable; ſhe therefore ſupported his deſertion with all the philoſophy in the world, and received the laſt preſent, as a

peace-maker, without expreſſing the ſmalleſt regret.

At this time a lieutenant in the guards was ſo enraptured by her beauty and wit, that he offered to marry her; his fortune not enabling him to make propoſals for her living with him in a certain ſtyle which ſuch women always affect, to browbeat modeſt virtue; he therefore concluded, that the honour of being his wife would weigh in the balance againſt finery purchaſed by vice.

The infatuated youth found his error. She received his offers with ſcorn, and with the greateſt effrontery ſaid "ſhe would either be a peereſs of the realm, or remain ſovereign over the hearts of mankind."

With all the captivating allurements ſhe was miſtreſs of, ſhe did not find it ſo eaſy to obtain her deſired rank as ſhe expected. In thoſe more vulgar and leſs poliſhed times, peers were not ſo well inclined to marry ladies of public notoriety. Some narrow prejudices in favour of virtue

tue and reputation made men more cautious in the choice of a partner for life, and for the mothers of their children; and thoſe few, who ſoared above faſtidious obſervances, found the general tide of opinion againſt them, and met with reprobation inſtead of applauſe.

Mrs. Mellor, therefore, unfortunately, remained untitled, though the companion of ſeveral peers; whilſt her friend the *ci-devant* valet (now *Mr. Norris*) continued the private favourite, and the regulator of her family.

But the links of vice are brittle, and ſoon broken. Mr. Norris having the command of all his lady's money, jewels, and articles of value, took an opportunity, one time when ſhe was one in a party of pleaſure to Hampton-Court for a few days, to convey away every valuable ſhe poſſeſſed, and had been embarked for France two days before ſhe returned.

He had a control ſo high and unlimited in her houſehold, that the ſervants ſaw a number of boxes and all the plate taken away, without preſuming to aſk any

queſtions. On her return, therefore, and aſking for her favourite ſwain, ſhe was petrified by the information that "he had been from home four days, ever ſince he carried away all the plate and boxes—"

"Plate and boxes!" repeated ſhe, wildly; "My God! What plate? What boxes? Where is he gone?"

They aſſured her, and with truth, that they knew not; and a very ſhort examination into her drawers and cloſets convinced her that he had helped himſelf to almoſt every valuable ſhe poſſeſſed, except the few ornaments then about her perſon.

Exclamations, curſes, tears, and threatened vengeance followed the conviction of her loſſes: but the object of them was gone beyond the reach of her power; and with a well-furniſhed houſe, and a tolerable ſtock of beauty, ſhe had the world to begin again.

At firſt ſhe was nearly frantic, and ſet every engine at work to diſcover the traitor who had ſo baſely abuſed her confidence: but no intelligence arriving, ſhe found that fretting might impair her beauty,

beauty, but never would recover her property. Patience, *per* force, was the only remedy to preſerve her complexion, and lead to future acquiſitions.

She continued for ſome time in high life, gradually deſcending from the peer to the commoner, and from thence to a lower order of beings; till at length, in the wane of her charms, ſhe was overtaken by poverty, the conſequence of unbounded extravagance, and fell into that dreadful vortex of vice and miſery, where we can trace her no farther, but may eaſily conceive what muſt be the laſt ſad cloſing ſcene.

From this dark proſpect we turn with pleaſure to that amiable family, who, though not exempt from cares and anxieties, had that delightful internal conſolation of knowing they had not drawn them on themſelves by any impropriety of conduct.

The Earl of B * * and his family received, at Edinburgh, every attention and reſpect their rank and characters demanded: from Madame Gaudry, the warmeſt

kindneſs, the ſincereſt participation in their happineſs. They earneſtly intreated her to accompany them to London; particularly Lady P * * *, whoſe heart *having* experienced an entire revolution of feelings ſince ſhe had *felt* herſelf *a mother*, recollected her coldneſs and indifference towards that worthy woman with regret and confuſion; ſhe was therefore very deſirous of making ſome atonement by future kindneſs.

But Madame Gaudry had loſt all reliſh for amuſements beyond what her ſituation obliged her to partake in, and London was of all places the moſt diſagreeable to her. She reſpectfully, yet ſteadily, declined the invitation, but compromiſed, by engaging to paſs part of the enſuing ſummer with them at B * * Caſtle—

"For that," ſaid Lady L * * *, "muſt always be *my favourite reſidence.* In that hoſpitable manſion was the forſaken orphan reared with care and tenderneſs by the beſt of men—by a noble and generous lady; *there* I firſt ſaw my beloved Edward; there every wiſh of my heart was completed,

completed, by being an acknowledged child, and by giving my hand to the poſſeſſor of that heart. O ſpot! for ever dear, for ever ſacred!" cried ſhe, with an enthuſiaſm natural to her character, "may the inhabitants of thy peaceful walls ever enjoy a large portion of thoſe bleſſings beſtowed upon and enjoyed by the grateful Elinor!"

Lord L * * * caught her to his boſom—"And may your no leſs grateful and more obliged Edward never taſte one pleaſure, receive one bleſſing from Heaven, when he ſeeks for either independent of your participation."

Tears fell on the cheeks of their delighted parents. "My dear children," ſaid the good earl, "hearts like yours, formed for domeſtic happineſs, will find no true pleaſure but in the boſoms of your family; yet ſociety has claims upon you, and your time of life requires that you ſhould mix with the world, at leaſt with ſuch parts of it as partake of its pleaſures, without being ſlaves to its diſſipations. Select for your

companions only ſuch as are reſpectable, rational, and virtuous, and with them you may ſafely enjoy amuſements fitted to your age and rank, without danger of incurring remorſe or ſorrow."

"Ah!" ſaid Lady P * * *, "my beloved Elinor may regard me as a Pharos, to warn her againſt the vortex of diſſipation and vice; and as—with confuſion I ſpeak it—I am not entitled to adviſe or reprove, let the errors of the mother teach her darling child to avoid the ſnares and allurements of folly, which gradually weakens virtue, and too often terminates in confirmed vice."

Madame Gaudry, who beheld, with a mixture of pleaſure and generous concern, the ſolemnity that took poſſeſſion of Lady P * * *'s features, immediately gave a different turn to the converſation, by inquiring if they had heard that Sir William and Lady Douglas were on their return from the continent. As they anſwered in the negative, ſhe proceeded to ſay a lady, related to the family, had called on her that morning, ſaying the Douglas family

would ſoon be in Scotland, in conſequence of a violent fracas between the mother and daughter; the young counteſs aſſuming too much, her ladyſhip giving up too little; and neither chooſing to recede from their aſſumed conſequence of acting for themſelves, and dictating to the other. Their diſagreements had riſen to ſuch unpardonable lengths on both ſides, that a rupture enſued, and Lady Douglas refuſed to proceed on her journey.

Her ſon, who had vainly endeavoured to reconcile the equally aggrieved parties, finding all his remonſtrances and efforts ineffectual to reſtore harmony between them, was compelled to attend on his mother's motions, as he could not leave her in a foreign country, and they were now on their return; the incenſed mother execrating the undutiful daughter, while it was generally believed *that* daughter would be equally puniſhed in her choice of a huſband, whoſe jealous diſpoſition and churliſh temper had already been viſible in ſeveral inſtances, to the great diſſatisfaction of his haughty lady. He had,

however, permitted her to ſee, that *he* would be maſter, and to contend, would in all probability only ſerve to provoke ill-treatment.

"I am ſorry for both ladies," ſaid the generous Lady L * * *; "and the more ſo, as it muſt be a painful affair to Sir William, for whom I have the higheſt reſpect."

"No man deſerves it more," ſaid Lord L * * *. "His character abroad was truly eſtimable. We never met, but I have heard him ſpoken of in terms that do him honour."

"Sir William is a favourite of ours," ſaid the counteſs; "and I hope he will return in a diſpoſition of mind that will enable us to cultivate his regards. Perhaps Lady Douglas has received a leſſon from her ungrateful daughter, which, added to the recent events in our family, will teach her to moderate her pride and aſſumption —always unbecoming in every rank of life, and moſt ſo in thoſe, whoſe claims to reſpect are never diſputed, unleſs they are aſſerted with arrogance."

The

The following day after this converſation the whole party took an affectionate leave of Madame Gaudry, and proceeded on their journey to England; not, indeed, with hearts perfectly at eaſe, for the ſtrange retirement of the baron from all his friends threw a cloud over their beſt enjoyments.

Whilſt they are on the road, we will avail ourſelves of our right to follow that unhappy man, and look into his very heart.

Alas! all there was dark and gloomy, weak and contradictory. Sometimes he curſed himſelf for his folly and reſentment, when paſſion prompted him to diſcloſe his ſecret to the earl: then he wiſhed he had never beheld Elinor, or encouraged thoſe involuntary emotions in her favour which had chiefly tended to make him give up Mr. Glendower. *Him* he execrated without mercy, ſince his vices and abandoned conduct had been the primary ſource of all his preſent miſery. But for that, Elinor would never have been his acknowledged legitimate daughter.

Could

Could he have foreſeen the conſequences, no principles of rectitude, it is feared, would have induced him to do Elinor juſtice, or give up a ſecret that threw reproach on himſelf. But the effects of this, we may call it *compelled* act of juſtice, were more terrible than he expected. Conſcience pointed a thouſand arrows to deſtroy his peace—the earl and counteſs awed him by their ſuperior virtue—Lady P * * *'s tenderneſs for her daughter was an implied reproach for having ſo long withheld from her ſo great a treaſure; and every expreſſion of regret for her former follies he directed as an inſult deſigned for him.

Conſcious that Elinor *muſt think* ſhe had been cruelly treated, he thought ſhe muſt deſpiſe the author of her wrongs; nor could the name of father create regard, when his actions had proved no parental tenderneſs had warmed his boſom. From hence, every look or word of reſpect and affection he conſtrued as an effort to make *herſelf* reſpectable and engaging at *his* expence.

Thus

Thus a ſelf-condemned mind, and a jaundiced eye, perverted every kindneſs into a curſe, and that curſe followed him inceſſantly.

The faithful follower of his wretched maſter had lived with him a number of years, and was really attached to him. They retired to a ſmall village in the north of Scotland among the ignorant peaſantry, to whom his language was perfectly unintelligible, for he ſpoke French; and as they underſtood and ſpoke only the broadeſt Scotch dialect, it was extremely difficult for the ſervant to make them comprehend him in order to obtain the neceſſaries of life.

The melancholy and monotonous life he was compelled to live here, at firſt accorded with the gloom that pervaded his mind, and he ſeemed to enjoy it; but in a few weeks both the baron and his attendant grew diſcontented, reſtleſs, and weary, both of their habitation and neighbourhood.

The barren mountains, the uncultivated vallies, and the wretchedneſs of the poor peaſants,

peaſants, became diſguſtful and horrid; he could no longer wander about the hills, he confined himſelf at home; books afforded no relief; he had but few, and thoſe few he had exhauſted; ſociety he had none, and the only rational being near him was grown gloomy, peeviſh, and viſibly unhappy.

Regret for the pleaſures he had once ſo laviſhly enjoyed; a retroſpection on the adulation and reſpect that had followed his ſteps in the court of his royal maſter; and the conſequence his preſence gave to every entertainment, as the favourite of the king; tortured him almoſt to madneſs when he drew to his mind the cruel reverſe.

His enemies now triumphed in the tarniſh of his reputation, exaggerated every error, branded him with every reproach, and even the few friends attached to him could only lament and wonder, without the power of reſcuing his character from ſhame and obliquity.

"And all this accumulation of diſgrace and vexation," cried he, one evening, ſtarting from a painful reverie, "all my

my miſeries are derived from that vile, unprincipled ingrate, for whoſe ſake I ventured ſo much, for whoſe intereſt I purſued thoſe crooked paths that have thus terminated in eternal reproach!"

Miſtaken, unhappy man! avarice and ambition were the cauſes that had ſuggeſted his unjuſt plan to counteract the decrees of Providence, and his own deviation from rectitude had made more than one victim to the duplicity of his ſchemes; how then dared he to arraign the juſtice that had overtaken him, or lament the confeſſion, which ought to have proceeded from virtue and repentance, when it was a momentary impulſe, the conſequence of paſſion and diſappointment, and which a falſe pride and an unpardonable turpitude of ſoul made him hourly regret!

But to return:—As he ſtarted up, in the frenzy of the moment, he accidentally fixed his eyes on a pair of piſtols which had hung in one corner of the room from his firſt entrance into the cottage. He flew to the ſpot, and was in the act of directing it to his heart, when the ſound of voices

voices and a loud knocking at the door gave ſo ſudden an alarm that the fatal inſtrument fell from his hand to the floor, went off and ſhot him through the foot, the ball coming out in an oblique direction above his heel.

He dropped back into a chair; the ſame moment the door was opened, and a peaſant uſhered in a gentleman ſupporting a lady who appeared to be in great pain. They had heard the piſtol go off, which induced them to unlatch the door, the baron's ſervant being gone out to fetch milk.

Seeing the blood on the floor, and the unhappy man almoſt ſinking from his chair from the various emotions that overcame him—"My God!" cried the gentleman, having placed the lady on a vacant ſeat; "My God! ſir, what is the meaning of this; what have you done?"—"Nothing," replied the baron, faintly; "the piſtol has wounded me, accidentally, in my foot."

"*Providentially*, I am inclined to believe," returned the other; but looking earneſtly

earneſtly on him—" ſurely it cannot be, *I muſt be miſtaken*, 'tis impoſſible that I ſhould behold in this place Baron P * * *." —" *You* are Sir William Douglas," replied he, fiercely, " but you have no concerns with Baron P * * *. What brought you here ?"

" An unfortunate accident, as I then conceived it to be," anſwered Sir William (for it really was he and his mother who came ſo opportunely to ſave the baron from the completion of the deepeſt crime); " but ſelf-conſideration is loſt in the happineſs I feel in being the inſtrument of divine goodneſs, to ſave the life of a fellow-creature. Before we can enter into any further explanation let us examine the wound."

The baron, at firſt, peremptorily refuſed, but the remonſtrances of Sir William at length ſubdued his ferocious pride; and the young gentleman having ſeen the dreſſing of piſtol wounds abroad, and knowing that no profeſſional man could be procured within many miles diſtance, he exerted the beſt of his knowledge, ſtopt the blood, put in

in ſome lint, and bound it up with care and tenderneſs.

While this buſineſs was going forward, the baron's mind was in tumults. He had only once ſeen Sir William Douglas, when he came on a morning viſit to B * * Caſtle; but the moment he entered the cottage he as inſtantly recollected him, and was almoſt petrified by a viſit ſo unexpected, ſo unwiſhed for.

Sir William was entirely unacquainted with the late developement of Elinor's hiſtory; of whom, after the final rejection he had received at Bath, he had reſtrained himſelf from inquiring after, for the ſake of his own peace, and from the natural feelings of family pride, inſulted by a rejection from an obſcure young woman.

He therefore, a ſtranger to preceding circumſtances, was aſtoniſhed to find Baron P * * * in the "*malancholic foringer gentleman*," whom the peaſants mentioned as "the only inhabitant in their parts who could help him and the lady. He had taken ſo much obſervation of the baron's perſon, which was not eaſily forgotten when

when once ſeen, that however diſguiſed by dreſs, or altered by a diſtempered mind, he could not fail of recollecting him when looking earneſtly on his face.

To meet with him in this obſcure, wild part of the kingdom was an event ſo extraordinary, that, with the attending circumſtances, had made him regardleſs of his mother, who was exhauſted by terror and fatigue.

Sir William had juſt completed dreſſing and binding up the foot when Samuel, the baron's ſervant, entered. The ſight of ſo many unexpected viſitors, and the ſituation of his maſter, pale, and almoſt fainting from the various perturbations of his mind, greatly ſurpriſed him; the *accident* that had happened was briefly explained to him, but it was plainly diſcernible, from the expreſſion of his countenance, that he entertained ſimilar doubts with Sir William Douglas as to the *accidental* part of the buſineſs.

The arrival of the ſervant turned the attention of Sir William to his mother: they were, as had been related by Madame Gaudry

Gaudry to Lady L * * *, on their return to Scotland, when, driving up a high hill, one of the horſes ſuddenly fell, to all appearance lifeleſs, and but for the inſtant aſſiſtance of the ſervants in holding the other horſe whilſt the poſtillion diſmounted, in all probability the carriage would have run back, and the travellers muſt have been inevitably killed.

Sir William helped out his mother, who was fainting with terror; and, as the horſe was found to be really dying, no other reſource was left for them but to ſeek ſhelter in ſome cottage for the night, as it was impoſſible to reach the next poſt town. They deſcended the hill, and at the foot of it found a miſerable hovel, where an old man, his ſon, the ſon's wife, and four children, all lived together in two ſmall, clay-built rooms of eight feet ſquare.

Shocked beyond meaſure at the wretched appearance of thoſe poor creatures, Lady Douglas turned with diſguſt from poverty perſonified, but Sir William felt a generous concern, his humanity was ſuperior to pride; he inquired, in a voice that denoted

noted the feelings of his heart, if any accommodation for a lady could be procured near at hand.

The young man aſſured him, there was not a cottage that could receive them within three miles.—" O Heaven!" exclaimed her ladyſhip, " three miles! impoſſible that I can walk one mile; ſure 'tis better the horſe ſhould drag us on."—" That is ſtill more impoſſible," replied Sir William; " when one poor animal is already dead with fatigue, the other, I am certain, is totally incapable of taking us through the rugged roads and hills between this and the next town."

" Then we muſt return and ſit in the carriage whilſt the ſervants go for horſes," ſaid ſhe, " for I would rather paſs ſome hours in that dreary ſpot, than enter this horrid hole among ſuch creatures."—" I heartily wiſh," ſaid the old man, " we had better to offer."—" At leaſt, madam," added the young woman, " here is a clean ſeat," offering a ſtool, which, though brown, was nicely poliſhed by conſtant rubbing,

rubbing, and ſome new eggs, with a little ſweet milk.

"Thoſe creatures," ſaid Sir William, with a look of reproach at his mother, "have hoſpitality and natural good breeding; Heaven has bleſt them with hearts that may put their ſuperiors to the bluſh."—"I am ſorry," returned the young woman, "for the lady's ſake, that we have no better to offer; for ourſelves, *we* are content with the roof that ſhelters us from cold, and with the food that we procure by our induſtry."

"You are happy and reſpectable," ſaid Sir William, "but your voice and language are above your condition."

"My father, ſir," ſaid ſhe, "was a miniſter, but a large family were ſent into the world to get their bread, after receiving ſuch an education and ſuch advice as became his cloth. I married a worthy man; we once lived rather better than now: fire deſtroyed our former habitation, and reduced us to poverty: our laird died, his ſon proved ſevere and unfeeling:

feeling: we ſubmitted to our fate with patience; we live here happy in ourſelves, and have no vain wiſhes for things we cannot attain."

"Sir William," cried Lady Douglas, "am I to wait here all night, almoſt ſinking into the earth, whilſt you liſten to ſuch ſtuff. What is it to us who or what *ſhe* was? think, if you pleaſe, what is to become of *me*."

"Why, I have been thinking," ſaid the old man, "that likely the malancholic foringer gentleman might take the gentlefolks in, and he lives about a mile and half off, through that valley."—This poſſible chance of a retreat was caught at by Sir William, and the young man offered to guide them to the houſe.

Sir William reſpectfully took leave of the miniſter's daughter, and left, upon the rejected ſtool, a handſome token of his gratitude and humanity; aſſuring her, that ſhe would ſhortly hear from him again.

She bowed in ſilence; tears, more expreſſive than words, ſpoke the grateful language of her heart. The woman of

high birth turned, diſdainful, from the hovel which contained virtues that would have added dignity to *her* rank, and were more entitled to reſpect than the proud boaſt of anceſtry, that had given neither ſenſibility nor generoſity to their deſcendant.

The good peaſant guided the weary Lady Douglas and her ſon to the baron's cottage; they arrived at the critical moment when his life or death hung in the balance, and were the inſtruments of Providence to prevent the completion of his intended deſtruction.

Sir William forced a preſent on his grateful conductor, neither deſired nor expected, but he accompanied the donation with words of kindneſs that were irreſiſtible; and the man returned to his home bleſſing his benefactor, and with humble gratitude to Heaven for the favours conferred upon him and his family.

The baron appeared more compoſed when he had the ſervices of his domeſtic, and recovering courage from neceſſity, he obſerved the diſorder of Lady Douglas,

and

and ordered Samuel to give the lady ſome cordial, to make up the fire, and prepare what refreſhments he had in the houſe; then addreſſing Sir William, —"As I am doubtleſs indebted to accident for this viſit, and wholly unprepared to entertain company, you muſt excuſe the want of accommodations I have not the power to offer."

Sir William made a polite reply, and apologiſed for his intruſion by relating the accident that had occaſioned it. He rightly judged ſomething very extraordinary muſt have driven a nobleman to ſeek a retreat like that, from a court where he had been an unrivalled favourite, and one of its chief ornaments; but he was too conſiderate and polite to avow any curioſity or aſk any improper queſtions.

Not ſo delicate was Lady Douglas, who had been an attentive obſerver of every occurrence; the moment ſhe had ſwallowed her cordial, and reſted from her fatigue, without ceremony ſhe began to expreſs her ſurpriſe at his "ſhocking ſitu-

ation," and abruptly to demand the cauſe of it.

The baron was hurt and mortified; he found that his diſgraceful ſtory had not reached their ears, and to relate it himſelf was too humiliating, and indeed impoſſible.

After a ſhort pauſe, therefore, he replied—" That ſome very extraordinary events had induced him to quit the court, and by a voluntary ſecluſion of himſelf from all company or converſation, he hoped to have found the peace he had loſt; but happineſs or miſery was not local, ſince only diſappointment had followed his ſteps even in ſolitude: adding, in a firm tone of voice, " that he muſt be excuſed from being more particular, and requeſted all obſervations on his ſituation might be baniſhed from their converſation."

Sir William bowed in ſilent acquieſcence, but Lady Douglas was half mad with curioſity and vexation; the leſs inclined he was to ſatisfy her, the more, in proportion, her deſire for information increaſed; and he was obliged, more than once,

once, to bear with impertinent queſtions and alluſions that gave him an infinity of pain and mortification.

At length Lady Douglas, tired of her fruitleſs endeavours to obtain his confidence, abruptly aſked him, if he knew any thing of the Earl of B * *'s family, whether they were in Scotland, or if that pert, inſignificant, low-born girl yet reſided with them? Sir William, extremely hurt, was about to reprove his mother with ſome aſperity, when looking at the baron, ſurpriſe at *his* emotions tied his tongue.

Indeed it is impoſſible to deſcribe the agitations which theſe abrupt queſtions occaſioned. The baron ſtarted, looked wild, confuſed, and angry; even her ladyſhip was ſtartled, and wondered at the effects her words had produced. A ſilence of ſome moments ſucceeded, during which the baron had been ſtruggling to compoſe himſelf to anſwer her.

"I know not," ſaid he, "if the earl and his family are now at B * * Caſtle; a ſhort time ſince they went there to ce-

lebrate the marriage of their ſon."—"How!" cried ſhe; "Is Lord L * * * married? May I aſk to what lady?"—"To that 'pert, inſignificant, low-born girl' your ladyſhip inquired after."

It is hard to ſay whether the rude retort of her own words, or information ſo little expected, gave her the moſt vexation at the moment. Whilſt ſhe was trying to repreſs her indignation and equal mortification, Sir William was recovering from a temporary pang his boſom felt on hearing his once adored Elinor was married.

Deſpair and a becoming pride had greatly tended to conquer a paſſion that never could be gratified; yet his heart was intereſted, and its natural nobleneſs and generoſity enabled him to feel a degree of pleaſure in her happineſs, and his pride was ſatisfied in her choice, which had not degraded the partiality he had ſo openly avowed for her.

He was therefore the firſt to recover from the aſtoniſhment the baron's information had occaſioned—"Lord L * * * is a happy, enviable man," ſaid he, generouſly;

rouſly; "for in my opinion Miſs Maſham was the moſt amiable young woman I ever beheld; and as Lady L * * *, I have no doubt but ſhe will do honour to the family who have been capable of eſtimating her merits ſo juſtly."

"Family!" exclaimed her angry ladyſhip: "Is it poſſible that the earl and counteſs have been ſo abſurd as to countenance their ſon's folly?"

"Not only to countenance, but exult and rejoice in ſuch a daughter as the proudeſt peer might glory in."

The baron ſpoke with a warmth that ſilenced the lady and ſurpriſed Sir William, who, however, ſaw that the ſubject had better be dropped; and the ſervant opportunely announcing to Lady Douglas that the bed was ready, ſhe withdrew in ſilence, not leſs chagrined and mortified than fatigued and ſpiritleſs. She was attended by an old woman, the only female ſervant the baron kept, and her awkward ſervices were repulſed with contempt.

This journey had been productive of only diſappointments and vexation to the

haughty lady. The firſt day ſhe had landed on Britiſh ground her own woman deſerted her; ſhe had borne her ill-humour and inſolence with much impatience, when in a foreign country, and determined to be revenged on the very firſt opportunity.

She was delighted with the rupture between the mother and the daugther, and the conſequent return of the former to her own country. On their arrival, ſhe ſought an occaſion to offend her lady, who in a rage bid her "begone from her preſence." She gladly profited by the paſſion ſhe had raiſed, and left her without any ceremony, having taken care that her lady ſhould not be much in her debt.

This deſertion had of courſe greatly inconvenienced her ladyſhip, who, rather than take any of the "low wenches" that might have been hired, choſe to put up with the ſervices of chambermaids at the inns, until ſhe ſhould arrive at Douglas Caſtle, to which ſhe was carrying a diſappointed, diſcontented mind, and a heart ſwelling

ſwelling with rage againſt an ungrateful daughter.

We ſhall leave her to the thorns of her pillow, a puniſhment ſufficiently painful to a proud, envious, ill-tempered woman, who conſtantly repined at the happineſs of others, and was incapable of enjoying any pleaſure but in the poor triumph of pride over humble merit.

Sir William with extreme difficulty compelled the baron to retire to his ſervant's bed; he knew the wound in his foot muſt be painful, and ſaw the extreme hurry and perturbation of his ſpirits; and knowing there could be only two beds in the cottage, except a wretched one in a ſmall adjoining cabin, where the old woman ſlept, he inſiſted on ſleeping in a chair himſelf, and that the baron ſhould take Samuel's bed.

The baron ſubmitted. He was not in ſpirits to contend: he found himſelf ill, and wiſhed both mother and ſon a thouſand miles off.

The following morning Sir William heard, from the ſervant, that his maſter

was in a high fever, and in agonies of pain. Greatly alarmed, he diſpatched Samuel for a ſurgeon. The neareſt of them lived eleven miles off, and the roads were extremely bad: but there was no alternative; for when he viſited the unhappy man, he perceived him to be alarmingly ill.

Lady Douglas had her breakfaſt, but continued in a very ill humour, impatiently expecting the ſervants, who, at laſt, made their appearance, conducted by the friendly cottager. Another horſe had been procured, and the carriage was ready, but could not be drawn up within half a mile of the baron's cottage, from the narrow paſſage that terminated the neighbouring valley. She gladly ſubmitted to the fatigue of walking that diſtance, to renew her journey, and was inquiring for her ſon, to leave the houſe immediately, when he appeared, with traces of the deepeſt concern in his countenance, and ſhe learnt, to her infinite vexation, that it was impoſſible for him to leave the baron in his preſent melancholy ſtate.

She

She grew outrageous.—"Did he ſuppoſe ſhe would conſent to paſs a day and another night in that miſerable hole? What was the baron to them? Had they not been driven there by accident, his own ſervant muſt have taken care of him; and he could do ſo ſtill, without his officious ſervices. She would not ſtay another hour, ſhe was determined."

"I ſhall be very ſorry, madam, that you muſt then travel alone, for both honour and humanity forbid me to leave a gentleman in the bed of ſickneſs, who quitted his own bed to accommodate you."

She was aſtoniſhed—ſhe raved—upbraided him with want of duty and affection, in his attentions to others more than to her; ſaid *ſhe* ſhould die if compelled to ſtay there among ſavages, in a place little better than a deſert. All her rage, intreaties, and even commands were in vain; her ſon reſpectfully, but decidedly, declared his reſolution to wait the arrival of a ſurgeon, and, if his preſence were neceſſary,

ceſſary, to remain there till the unfortunate man was better.

"Then, ſir," ſaid ſhe, haughtily, "I will go to the next town, and wait there, where I can have ſome more tolerable accommodations, until you can diſtinguiſh between the duty you owe to me, and the regard due to a ſtranger. I ſee that the unhappy mother has loſt both her children."

This cruel, unmerited reproach affected Sir William. He took her hand—"For God's ſake, madam, do me more juſtice. The duties of a Chriſtian—even common humanity obliges me to remain here. I wiſh you to proceed to the next ſtage; I will either join you this evening, or ſend you ſuch ſtrong reaſons for not doing it as I am ſure you will approve in the hour of reflection: but I hope to come in perſon."

A little mollified, though not reconciled, ſhe took a cool leave of him, and, attended by the ſervants and cottager, walked to her carriage. She flung herſelf into it without noticing the latter, who had underſtanding

derſtanding enough to feel more of diſguſt than of mortification at her abſurd pride.

Meantime Sir William anxiouſly expected the ſurgeon. The diſtance and bad roads made it noon before he arrived, during which period the baron had become delirious. The extreme dejection that had for ſome time preyed on his ſpirits—the temporary frenzy of the preceding day, when he had attempted his own deſtruction—the preſence of Sir William in that critical moment—with a diſcovery of his ſituation—the various conjectures they would form, and the recollection of the reſpect and high conſideration he had once been honoured with—all together crowding on his mind, and extreme pain from the inflammation of the wound in his foot—no wonder that his ſenſes grew diſordered, and a delirium followed.

The firſt moment that the ſurgeon ſaw him he pronounced his caſe *hopeleſs*, though his recovery was not *impoſſible*. The wound was not of much conſequence: but he appeared to be diſordered in his mind, and from that he had every thing to fear.

As

As Sir William found that he could not poſſibly leave the unhappy man, he ſent off an expreſs to his mother, who returned the next morning with the ſatisfactory intelligence, that on her arrival at the ſtage ſhe had met with General and Lady Forbes, going to England, and had been perſuaded by them to change her route, and accompany them to London, for which city they ſhould take their journey, and proceed in a few hours.

This information tended much to the content of Sir William, who now felt himſelf at liberty to attend to the duties of humanity. Five days and nights the fever raged with unabating violence: on the ſixth, the ſurgeon (for he was both ſurgeon and phyſician in thoſe days) pronounced his death near at hand. The fever abated, but nature was exhauſted. As he grew weaker, his reaſon returned, and he ſeemed to know Sir William and his faithful Samuel. They obſerved his eyes were turned towards Heaven, as his lips feebly moved, ſeveral times in the day. Towards evening a few words

words were articulate, imploring the mercy of Heaven, and pardon of his ſins. He aſked for water—Sir William gave him a ſmall quantity. He looked earneſtly at him—"Follow the paths of virtue," ſaid he, "and you will be happy. The worſhippers of vice muſt be miſerable. May the Almighty forgive me, and bleſs my—"

The laſt words died on his tongue, and a ſhort ſtruggle, with a heavy ſigh, cloſed his lips for ever!

Peace be to his aſhes! and may the wretched termination of all *his* ambitious views warn his deſcendants from that unwarrantable pride, from thoſe crooked paths, to gratify an inordinate and reprehenſible love of riches, which generally meets with diſappointment, and is followed by remorſe, ſorrow, and reproach!

The melancholy cloſing ſcene, to which Sir William was a witneſs, made a deep impreſſion upon his mind: but he was now called upon to active exertions; and all conſiderations of a delicate nature no longer exiſting, he enquired of Samuel ſuch particulars

particulars as were neceſſary for his government.

The faithful and much-afflicted ſervant, well-acquainted with every incident of his maſter's life for ſome years paſt, and knowing from him that myſterious tranſaction which had lately been developed, and which had ultimately been the cauſe of his death, related, without reſerve, every circumſtance that had happened, and aſtoniſhed Sir William with the ſtrange and extraordinary events that had been produced by ambition and avarice.

He felt uncommon pleaſure in the diſcovery of Elinor's birth, and indulged a ſecret triumph that he had been able to diſtinguiſh her merits under all the diſadvantageous reports to her prejudice, which had operated on the minds of the neighbourhood, and particularly among his own family.

He had now to ſend off expreſſes to the Earl of B * * and Lord L * * *, and in the uncertainty of their preſent reſidence, he concluded it would be wiſe to ſend both to B * * Caſtle and to London.

He

He ſent to the next town for ſuch accommodations as the place afforded, to pay the laſt duties to the unfortunate baron, and had the corpſe removed there, firſt taking an inventory and poſſeſſion of the few valuables that were in the cottage, and ſending for the miniſter's daughter and her family to reſide in it, with an allowance of twenty pounds a year.

This habitation was a paradiſe to theirs, and the ſum ſettled on them more than adequate to their wants, for they choſe to eat the bread of induſtry, and lay by this abundance from their benefactor as a future proviſion for their children.

Sir William determined to remain in the town where the body had been conveyed to, until orders ſhould arrive from the family; and in this humane and conſiderate diſpoſition we muſt now leave him, to follow our favoutite Lady L * * * and her friends to London.

All that Elinor felt of ſurpriſe, when ſhe firſt ſaw Edinburgh, fell infinitely ſhort of her amazement on beholding the crowded ſtreets of London, the noble houſes,

houſes, and multitude of buildings. The people themſelves ſeemed to be a ſuperior order of beings; and had her heart been at eaſe, ſhe would have enjoyed with tranſport, the variety of ſtrange ſcenes that were every moment preſented to her view.

But, alas! though bleſt with an adoring huſband, careſſed by a tender mother, and ſurrounded by admiring and affectionate friends, ſhe felt the truth of what has ſince been remarked by an admired and elegant writer, "that in the midſt of apparent happineſs, the ſighing heart will remind us of its imperfection."

The unhappy, diſturbed mind of her father, his ſtrange abſence, and unaccountable prejudice againſt the kindneſs of his friends, was a ſource of continual inquietude to her boſom, and, ſhe ſaw, was equally diſtreſſing to her mother, though each ſtrove to hide her uneaſineſs from the other.

The ſteps taken to prove Elinor's birth, and the exertions of the family whoſe rights Mr. Glendower was deſtined

to

to have enjoyed, had quickly promulgated every circumſtance of the long-concealed myſtery, with aggravating ſtories, through the town; and the death of Mr. Glendower having reached London, *his* vices and follies were forgotten, and the whole blame of his errors was added to the ſhame and reproach thrown on the abſent baron.

Lady P * * * had given out that the baron had gone abroad to travel: but ſhe was extremely ſhocked to find his character ſo irreparably injured in the public opinion, that his re-appearance in the world could never be wiſhed for.

Lady L * * * was viſited by immenſe crowds, every perſon being eager to behold one ſo much talked of. She was the object of univerſal admiration, but ſhe felt little gratification from their praiſes, particularly as ſome voluble ladies and thoughtleſs gentlemen often expreſſed their admiration of her charms and accompliſhments, and in the ſame breath accuſed the cruelty of her father, in depriving

priving the world ſo long of ſuch an ornament to ſociety.

Shocked and diſguſted with their indelicacy—tired with a crowd, and a continual repetition of compliments that met with no vanity to gratify—ſhe longed to return once more to B * * Caſtle: but the earl inſiſted on her being preſented, and Lord L * * * was anxious to divert her mind, by taking her to every place of amuſement; ſhe therefore ſubmitted to their wiſhes, rather than make a point of following her own.

One morning ſhe accompanied Lady P * * * to a ſhop, to make a few purchaſes. They were looking over ſome millinery, when a lady in deep mourning, with all the traces of a recent ſickneſs in her languid countenance, came in, and aſked for ſome gloves. She appeared ſo very intereſting, that Lady L * * * could not keep her eyes from her; and as often as ſhe looked ſhe met the eyes of the ſtranger.

Lady

Lady P * * * was at the oppoſite ſide of the ſhop, with her back towards them; when turning ſuddenly round—"Look at this lace, my dear Elinor," ſaid ſhe.

The ſtrange lady inſtantly retreated, attempted to get into the back ſhop, but reeling with a heavy ſigh, ſhe caught hold of the counter, and would have dropped on the floor, had not a man in the ſhop broke her fall, by catching hold of her arm.

Lady L * * * flew to her aſſiſtance, ſupporting her head, and holding drops to her noſe. She ſoon recovered, opened her eyes, and beheld her humane aſſiſtant bending over her with anxious ſolicitude. She raiſed her feeble hand, and preſſed Lady P * * *'s to her lips—"Forgive me," ſaid ſhe, faintly.

"She ſeems to be above the common rank," ſaid Lady P * * *, ſoftly, to the ſhop-keeper. "Do you know her?"—"Only as a cuſtomer, madam," he replied: "ſhe lives at Putney—her name is Glendower."

"My

"My God!" exclaimed her ladyſhip, haſtening into a back parlour, where the unhappy woman was juſt raiſed into a chair, and was relieved by a ſhower of tears. She ſhrunk at the approach of Lady P * * *, and threw her head behind Lady L * * *'s ſhoulder.

"I hope you are better, madam," ſaid Lady P * * *, kindly, though not without ſome emotion. "You are with friends here, who ſincerely wiſh for your health and happineſs."

She gave the man a ſignal, and he withdrew.

Mrs. Glendower raiſed her head—"Do you know me, madam, and how unworthy I am of this kindneſs?"

"We will not think of the paſt," returned ſhe: "I am concerned to ſee you look ſo out of health."

"Ah!" ſaid ſhe, "I deſerve not this attention: but is it poſſible this lady can be the injured Elinor? Does *ſhe* know me for her worſt enemy—for Mrs. Glendower?"

"Good Heaven!" exclaimed Lady L * * *, "can you be Mrs. Glendower! No wonder I felt intereſted for the woman who firſt gave me the nouriſhment of life, and for whom I have felt, ſince I knew myſelf, equal pity and regard."

"You overcome me," cried the poor woman, burſting again into tears; "you humble me to the duſt by your goodneſs: but the truly good and virtuous have always mercy on the repentant. Indeed, indeed," added ſhe, with fervor, "I am a contrite ſinner; my heart is not abandoned, and misfortunes preſs hard upon me."

"Let us drop this ſubject," ſaid Lady L * * *. "Tell me your reſidence, and I will pay you a viſit."

"Aſtoniſhment!" returned ſhe. "How condeſcending, how gracious to a guilty woman! O madam, will you indeed come and ſpeak peace and pardon? Alas! I have deeply ſuffered for my crimes againſt you!"

Lady L * * * again intreated her ſilence, and taking her direction, promiſed

to

to ſee her in a day or two. Both ladies left her with words of kindneſs, and having given the man of the ſhop ſome orders, haſtened to their carriage.

Lady P * * * could not help remembering that there was a time when this woman had poſſeſſed her huſband's affections—that ſhe was alſo an accomplice in the cruel deception which robbed her of her child: but her ſubſequent conduct—the compunction ſhe had felt—her unwearied endeavours to oblige the baron to reclaim his child—the juſtice he had done to her integrity—and the recent death of her ſon—all together inſpired her with compaſſion; and when ſhe ſaw her humbled by guilt, and almoſt dying with ſhame and remorſe, ſhe no longer retained any ſentiments but thoſe of pity and forgiveneſs.

They returned home, not a little agitated by the events of the morning: but they were engaged to dine with Lady Macdonald, a relation of the earl's, and therefore agreed to poſtpone all further converſation on the ſubject till another opportunity.

opportunity. This was a friendly dinner party. In the evening Lady Macdonald had an aſſembly—the politer names of coteries, drums, and routes were not then known.

A great number of perſons came in; when, among the reſt, Lady L * * * heard the names of General Forbes, Lady Douglas, and Lady Forbes. This party had only arrived in town the preceding day: but the latter being extremely intimate with the lady of the houſe, and hearing that it was her public day, they were not willing to miſs any opportunity of ſeeing company.

Lady P * * * was at the other end of the room, buſily engaged, when they entered; but Lady L * * * was ſtanding cloſe by Lady Macdonald, who advancing a few ſteps to receive them, immediately preſented Lady L * * *, ſuch being the old-faſhioned cuſtoms of thoſe days, that every one muſt be introduced to the company by the lady of the houſe, and no improper perſons could be intruded on ſociety merely to crowd a room, or fill a place at a

card-table. In theſe leſs faſtidious times, people come in and go out without ceremony, and without being known to two-thirds of the company; they partake of refreſhments, play at the ſame table, and are as perfect ſtrangers next day, if they chance to meet in the ſtreets, as if they had never ſeen each other; and indeed, nine times out of ten even their names are unknown to one another.

But no ſuch polite and eaſy cuſtoms were then in being. People of a certain rank aſſociated together: little folks, and perſons of ſuſpicious characters, rarely found an opportunity to intrude among their betters. But to return—

The moment Lady L * * *'s name was announced, Lady Douglas advanced and ſaluted her—"I congratulate your ladyſhip on your marriage, and being reſtored to the rank you were born to. You muſt now know enough of the world to allow for former miſunderſtandings, when you were degraded by your ſituation."

"At leaſt, madam, I know enough to aſſure me, that no lady can degrade herſelf

ſelf by an obſervance of good breeding, even to her inferiors; and that no rank can entitle her to reſpect, when ſhe inſults the innocent and unoffending, however mean the object, who has perhaps more real claims to civility than the woman who can boaſt only the grandeur of her anceſtors, without poſſeſſing any merit of her own."

Lady L * * * ſaid this with an air of cool contempt, and turned from the meanly-proud woman, addreſſing another lady. No language can do juſtice to the rage of Lady Douglas. She forgot not only good breeding, but common humanity.

"Upon my word," cried ſhe, in the tone of a fury, "it would become your ladyſhip full as well to be in the wilds of Scotland, attending on your dying father, who is obliged to my ſon—"

She could not finiſh the ſentence. Lady L * * * turned wildly round—"My dying father! Good God! do you know where he is?"—"Yes, in a miſerable cottage, wounded and dying. My ſon is with him."

She juſt named the ſpot, with eyes ſparkling with pleaſure and revenge, when poor Lady L * * * flew to her mother, breathleſs with agitation.

"Be ſo good as to go with me," ſaid ſhe; "I am taken ſuddenly ill."

Lady P * * *, greatly alarmed, haſtened with her to another room. Several perſons had heard Lady Douglas, and made room for them to paſs, every one blaming her rudeneſs and abrupt intelligence.

Lady L * * * had ſuch command over her feelings, that ſhe ordered her carriage, and evaded all the anxious inquiries of her mother until they arrived home, where they were immediately followed by Lord L * * *, the earl, and counteſs, who had been in another apartment when their darling Elinor was ſo maliciouſly terrified by Lady Douglas: but the lady of the houſe thought it beſt to acquaint them that Lady L * * * had heard ſome diſagreeable intelligence reſpecting the baron, and was gone home with her mother.

They threw themſelves into their carriage, and were home before the others had ſeated themſelves.—"Tell me, deareſt child, what ails you," ſaid Lady P * * *. She had thrown herſelf into the arms of her huſband, whoſe tenderneſs produced a flood of tears that tended greatly to relieve the oppreſſion of her heart. She deſired to withdraw a few moments with Lord L * * *; they acquieſced, though much agitated to know the cauſe of her diſtreſs. To him ſhe related the abrupt communication ſhe had received, and beſought him to return and learn every particular from Lady Douglas whilſt ſhe prepared her mother to hear the painful tale.

Lord L * * * flew to obey the wiſhes of his lovely wife, while ſhe returned to her friends, and, by degrees, related the foregoing ſcene. Lady P * * * was greatly affected, not from the violence of her love for her huſband, for indifference had long ſince taken the place of affection; but the melancholy circumſtances he muſt be in, if ill in an obſcure part of the world, ſo diſtant from his family, ſhocked her

extremely, and ſhe declared her reſolution of ſetting off immediately to him if the intelligence was confirmed.

The return of Lord L * * *, (who had obtained every information from Lady Douglas, repeated with an ill-natured triumph that ſhe had the power to give pain to a woman who deſpiſed her,) aſſured them, beyond a doubt, of the baron's dangerous ſtate; and Lady P * * *, her daughter, and Lord L * * *, reſolved to ſet off for Scotland the following morning.

Happily the arrival of the expreſs, at five o'clock that ſame morning, ſpared them a long and fruitleſs journey. The letter was addreſſed to the earl, or his ſon, and contained a circumſtantial account of every occurrence already mentioned, Sir William adding, that he would wait there till he received their commands.

As there was no poſſibility of temporiſing when the ladies were preparing for their journey, Lord L * * * had the painful taſk of diſcloſing the melancholy termination of the baron's life, which occaſioned inexpreſſible grief to both the mother

and there learnt that ſhe was retired into Wales.

In leſs than a week after this inquiry ſhe received a letter from the afflicted, repentant woman, thanking her for her condeſcenſion and goodneſs, and acknowledging, "that the death of the baron, added to her unhappy ſon's, had entirely detached her from the world, and had taught her the obligations ſhe was under to devote the remainder of her life to prayer and penitence; ſhe had therefore ſettled herſelf in a ſmall cottage near the church where her dear mother was buried, and to prepare herſelf to join her pure ſpirit; her laſt breath," ſhe added, "would expire in prayers for the happineſs of Lady L * * * and her family."

They were all much affected by the ſincere contrition of this unfortunate woman, whoſe innocence had been betrayed, but whoſe heart abhorred the guilt ſhe was unwarily drawn into; all joined in a fervent aſpiration for her peace here, and happineſs hereafter.

The

The earl and countess gladly acceded to the wishes of their beloved daughter, and prepared for their return to B * * Castle; Lady P * * *, entirely weaned from her former dissipations, wanted no persuasions to attach herself to her daughter wherever she chose to reside, and Lord L * * * had not a single wish divided from his Elinor.

Sir William Douglas and his lady joyfully agreed to accompany their friends, and the two families already enjoyed the pleasure of a reciprocity of esteem that promised a duration to the end of their lives.

Their arrival in Scotland was a day of jubilee to their servants and tenants. The Malcolms were still alive, though the wife was bedridden; Bridget still figured among her neighbours in her yellow gown and scarlet petticoat; and old Malcolm still retained his grateful affection for Lady L * * *, though he could no longer hobble up to the castle.

That amiable woman and her worthy lord devoted themselves to their family and

and the comforts of the neighbouring poor, whoſe extreme wretchedneſs touched their hearts. They began to cultivate the barren lands, and to build ſmall, decent cottages; they encouraged and rewarded the induſtrious, and compelled the idle to work. In a ſhort time the face of the country was changed; the inhabitants round the caſtle were induſtrious, contented, and happy, ever bleſſing their generous lord and lady; who, delighted with the content they had diffuſed, partook largely in the happineſs they communicated to others. They purſued their plans of cultivation and improvement; and to *their* generous and beneficial exertions their deſcendants are to this day indebted for an enlarged income, a highly cultivated eſtate, and, above all, for examples in virtue, integrity, and true goodneſs, worthy of emulation in perſons of the higheſt rank, for "true nobility is ſeated in the mind."

THE END.

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